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**LAST CHANGES LAST CHANCES**

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YOUNG H. W. N. (1875)

*Laing*

# LAST CHANGE; LAST CHANCE;

BY  
**HENRY W. NEVINSON**



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DEDICATED  
IN GRATITUDE  
TO ALL MY FRIENDS  
MEN AND WOMEN, LIVING AND DEAD

*Not for us are content, and quiet, and peace of mind,  
For we go seeking a city that we shall never find.*

*There is no solace on earth for us—for such as we—  
Who search for a hidden city that we shall never see.*

*Only the road, and the dawn, the sun, the wind, and the rain,  
And the watch fire under the stars, and sleep, and the road again.*

From "The Seekers," by JOHN MASEFIELD.



## PREFACE

**I**N this volume I take up the simple narrative of my experiences from the day of my return from Berlin after the declaration of war on August 4th, 1914, as described in the final chapter of "More Changes More Chances." In that and in the previous volume, "Changes and Chances" (both published by my present publisher), I spoke of my boyhood in an Evangelical family typical of the Victorian age, and at The Schools, Shrewsbury, at that time an old-fashioned classical school. I spoke of my youth at Christ Church, Oxford, and my transformation there under a remarkable friendship; of my early manhood at Jena University, and in the East End and other parts of London, where I contrived to make a precarious livelihood by teaching, by serving as secretary to the London Playing Fields Society, and by hesitating attempts at literature. Then came my service for the *Daily Chronicle* under Massingham, as war correspondent in the Græco-Turkish War of 1897, as his literary editor in London, and his war correspondent during the South African War, in Ladysmith and Pretoria. An unhappy period of service to the same paper under a new editor with whom I had few points of agreement followed, but it was broken, first, by my part in exposing the abominations of Turkish misrule in Macedonia, and then by my exposure of the atrocious system of slavery in Portuguese Angola and the islands in the Gulf of Guinea (1903 to 1905).

I next told how I was in Russia for the *Daily Chronicle* under Robert Donald, and in the Caucasus and Georgia for *Harper's Magazine*, during the revolutionary years of 1905 to 1907. Then how I gladly accepted service under Massing-

## PREFACE

ham on the *Nation*, which he "created," and, whenever I was in England, wrote for him regularly. How he ceased to be editor in the year before his death is narrated in the present volume. During the "Unrest" in India (1907–1908) I was there for the *Manchester Guardian* under C. P. Scott, and on my return was appointed leader-writer for the *Daily News* under A. G. Gardiner. My support of the "Militants" in their demand for Woman Suffrage, and my protests against their treatment in gaol, broke that connection through no fault of the editor himself, soon after I had been present in his service at the violent outbreak in Barcelona and the simmering warfare upon the Riff in Morocco (1909). During the first and second Balkan Wars of 1912, 1913, I was again in Bulgaria, Albania, and Serbia, in the service of the *Daily Chronicle* under Robert Donald, and the *Manchester Guardian* under C. P. Scott. I was also present in Ireland at the time of the "Covenant" and the troubles in Ulster, for the *Manchester Guardian*. Finally, I was in Berlin for the *Daily News* under A. G. Gardiner when the Great War began, and through the kindness of Sir Edward Goschen, then our Ambassador, I was enabled to escape just in time, as narrated at the close of my last volume. It is at this point that the present volume begins.

The following Table of Contents summarises its subjects, but for further summary I may say that the narrative deals chiefly with my experiences during the Great War in Belgium, France, the Dardanelles, Salonika, Egypt, France again, and Germany after the Armistice; in Ireland during the prolonged troubles that led up to the Treaty of 1921; in the United States during a voyage of discovery and the Washington Conference of 1921–1922, at which I again served the *Manchester Guardian* under the same great editor; in Germany during the Ruhr occupation, serving the *Daily News* once more; in Ramsay MacDonald's Labour tour of 1924, serving the *New Leader* under H. N. Brailsford; and in Palestine (1926), again serving the *Manchester Guardian*.

At that point the last of these volumes of reminiscence ends, and I suppose it could not end better than in the Holy Land. I am quite aware of the charge that the story of one man's life and experiences cannot possibly be worth three volumes. I have heard that charge brought against the three volumes of even Lord Curzon's biography, and Lord Curzon's part in history was incomparably more important than mine could be. But, for all that, I think there may still be considerable interest in the records of one who has lived through the seventy years beginning in 1856, and has followed the course of their events with close interest, and sometimes with personal contact.

Historians have a habit of marking their periods by wars, and those seventy years, starting from the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, are easily marked by the Prussian wars against Denmark, Austria, and France ; the Russian war against Turkey ; the British wars in Egypt and the Soudan ; the Græco-Turkish War ; our South African War ; the Russo-Japanese War ; the Balkan Wars, and the Great War. Or one may mark the years by the political changes that have gradually brought the whole of the adult population, men and women, into the voting power of a democracy ; and the social changes are at least as wide. In things of the mind those seventy years include a period of imaginative literature unequalled in our history for power and variety ; a period of scientific discovery and invention beyond the dreams of miracle ; and a new aspect of the world's development that has transformed the whole conception of history and religion. Anyone who during those seventy years has used even a few of such opportunities for thought and action as have been mine should certainly have enough to fill three volumes with his records. But even as it is, I have been obliged almost entirely to omit the more intimate and personal memories of the disappointment, depression, rage, hatred, joy, and love that occupy so much of everyone's existence.

And now that, at the very best, my remaining years of life

## PREFACE

must be so few, I will take leave of those who have so kindly followed these reminiscences of a long and varied career. But the leave-taking must be rather hurried, for I am just starting to the Near East for the twelfth time.

H. W. N.

LONDON, *August*, 1928.

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# LAST CHANGES LAST CHANCES

## CHAPTER I

### WAR

*“Both sides had no small objects in view, but put all their strength into the war, and not unreasonably. For everyone plunges into an enterprise more keenly at the beginning, and at that time there were crowds of young people in the Peloponnese, and crowds in Athens, who, owing to their inexperience of war, rushed into it without reluctance. Indeed, now that the leading countries were engaged, the whole of Greece stood a-tiptoe with excitement. Many solemn sayings too were quoted, and many holy prognosticators hymned the future event, both in the belligerent countries and among neutrals. But by far the greater majority favoured the Spartan cause, chiefly owing to prophetic anticipations that the Spartans were going to restore freedom to Greece.”*

Thucydides on the beginning of the Peloponnesian War ;  
Book II, Chapter 8.

*“It is not yet certain that Russia would take up arms against us if we were to be again attacked by the French; but if the Russians were to declare war upon us the French would certainly join them immediately. And, after all, in such a war we should not be so very certain to win, while it would be a great misfortune even if we were victorious, as in any case we should lose a great deal of blood and treasure, and also suffer considerable indirect damage through the interruption of work and trade, and we should never be able to take anything from the French or Russians that would compensate us for our losses.”*

Bismarck to Dr. Moritz Busch; April 7, 1888. “Bismarck: Some Secret Pages in his History;” vol. III, page 182.

**I**N the final chapter—the chapter called “Crashed!”—of my previous volume, I said, adapting the words of St. John the Evangelist, that if the ultimate causes of the Great War should be written every one, I supposed even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Year by year since the double disasters of the

War and the Peace, the distinguished statesmen, ambassadors, and generals most closely concerned have issued their memoirs, their defensive versions, or their adverse criticisms, and one need not question the earnest solicitude of each to narrate the events with exactness, and to claim as motives the noblest that enlightened patriotism could inspire. Even if we went one step further and assumed that the narratives of all were precisely true, and their claims nobly justified, the war would remain only another instance of the philosopher's observation that tragedy is not the conflict of right and wrong, but of right and right. Indeed, the consoling and serviceable idea that one particular man or one particular nation was solely responsible for the violent deaths of some ten millions of young Europeans during the fifty-two months of the war has rapidly faded away since the orgy of folly at Versailles ; and for causes whether distant or immediate, the future historian will have to seek more deeply into the hearts and minds of men and nations.

To myself, who at that time had followed the course of European history rather closely for about thirty years, and had already been present at some of its crises, the chief motives that induced England's participation in the war appeared to be : in the first place, the necessity of saving France from destruction, both for our own preservation and for the preservation of a race which has given so much charm, beauty, and courageous thinking to the world. The outrage upon Belgium's neutrality was of immense service to Sir Edward Grey and the war-party at the moment, and it was amazing that the German Government or War Office should have imagined that England would watch it unmoved—as amazing as that the French military or political authorities should have commanded their armies first to strike through Alsace-Lorraine instead of massing upon the Belgian frontier. But there was nothing strange or new in tearing up treaties as “ scraps of paper.” Treaties more recent than the guarantee of Belgian neutrality (1839) had been freely torn up. In 1870-1871 Russia tore up the

Treaty of Paris (1856) ; in 1908 Austria and Bulgaria tore up the Treaty of Berlin (1878) ; and one could name other instances. Even Lord Courtney, that model of punctilious rectitude, laid it down (*I think at the crisis of 1908*) that no treaty was expected to last for ever, or even very long. Bethmann-Hollweg's phrase about "a scrap of paper" was as unfortunate as anything that German psychology could suggest, and it brought the whole of the British Cabinet into line, with only the two exceptions of Lord Morley and Mr. John Burns. But the storm it raised seems to me exaggerated, for we had remained unmoved when much bigger scraps of paper were torn up. But unmoved to allow a great Naval Power, as Germany had then become, to occupy the Belgian ports ! That was dangerous. That was impossible. When on August 4th I heard Bethmann-Hollweg say in Berlin (with many excuses) that the Belgian frontier had probably been crossed already, I prepared my escape.<sup>1</sup>

The growth of that Naval Power itself had been an increasing danger for nearly twenty years, and the growth had been speeded up since the construction of the *Dread-*

<sup>1</sup> The following summary of the main international events during the twenty-four years preceding the war may be of service : Kaiser William II (1890) dismisses Bismarck whose guiding principle had been friendship with Russia for fear of the military alliance of Russia with France ; the Kaiser takes the direction of German foreign affairs into his own hands ; Nicholas II becomes Tsar of Russia (1894) ; the Kaiser, perceiving the value of sea-power, schemes for a large enough German fleet to hold its own in the North Sea and protect German commerce throughout the world ; after the Jameson Raid he telegraphs to President Kruger congratulating him on his success in counteracting it (Jan. 1, 1896) ; after the defeat of China by Japan, Russia seizes Port Arthur, England seizes Wei-hai-wei, and Germany seizes Kiaochow (1897) ; Spanish-American war and Fashoda crisis (1898) ; South African War (1899-1902) ; Bülow's new German Navy Bill for doubling Germany's Navy (1900) ; Boxer rising in China suppressed by the combined Powers (1900) ; death of Queen Victoria (1901) ; Joseph Chamberlain vainly attempts alliance with Germany (1899-1901) ; Anglo-Japanese alliance (1902) ; Edward VII visits Paris (1903) ; arrangement as to Egypt and Morocco between France and England (1904) ; Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905) ; Dogger Bank incident, but war with Russia averted (1904) ; Kaiser's visit to Tangier, and Delcassé's fall (1905) ; Algeciras Conference on Morocco (1906) ;

## WAR

*nought* (ironic name !) had rendered our previous battleships obsolete, and so allowed Germany to start almost level as our rivals. For more than three centuries Britannia had obeyed the call to rule the waves. She had wiped out the rival fleets of Spain, Holland, and France in turn, and here was another to be wiped out. For Britannia had not then dreamt of allowing equality with the fleet of another nation, such as she admitted in Washington (1921). She must be first, and the rest nowhere. "Two keels to one !" The rule was simple and obvious, and our peril from aeroplanes was then hardly considered.

Almost equally powerful, on the commercial side, was another element of fear—fear of Germany's increasing trade and manufacture. Germany was probably at that time our best customer, paying for our goods by exchange with hers. If only we could ruin her trade ! If only we could extinguish her manufacturing power ! Then she would be obliged to buy more of our goods, and we should also capture the markets she then supplied. To the commercial mind that economic fallacy appealed with almost irresistible persuasiveness. We are a commercial people. Germany

Anglo-Russian agreement to divide Persia into spheres of influence (1907) ; Edward VII visits the Tsar at Reval, and the Kaiser in a *Daily Telegraph* interview protests his affection for England (1908) ; Young Turk revolution in Turkey : Prince Ferdinand declares himself Tsar of Bulgaria, and Austria annexes Bosnia-Herzegovina (1908) ; Russia threatens war with Austria, but the Kaiser stands beside Austria "in shining armour" (1909) ; the construction of the *Dreadnought* having reduced our former battleships to insignificance, Germany starts level in the race for a dominating fleet ; death of Edward VII (1910) ; Potsdam agreement between Kaiser and Tsar over Bagdad railway and Persia ; French occupy Fez, and German gunboat Panther appears in Morocco port of Agadir (1911) ; Lloyd George speaks in protest in the Mansion House (July, 1911) ; war narrowly avoided ; Italy seizes Tripoli (1911) ; the Balkan League defeats Turkey (1912) ; Treaty of London ; Second Balkan War, Greece, Serbia, and Roumania against Bulgaria ; Treaty of Bucharest (1913) ; Mr. Haldane's visit to Berlin having failed (1912), all Continental Great Powers increase armaments and men (1913) ; hostile intrigues between Austria and Serbia ; the Serajevo murders (June 28, 1914) ; Austria declares war on Serbia (July 28), Germany on Russia (August 1), Germany on France (August 3), England on Germany August 4).

## GERMAN RIVALRY

is a commercial rival. Germany must be destroyed. The conclusion seemed inevitable as Euclid.<sup>1</sup>

I was never taught Economics, but I think it probable that at the root of this economic fallacy lay the spirit of separatist Nationalism, which, next to Industrialism, was the leading *motif* of last century's inharmonious orchestra. Closely connected with that Nationalism was the further scramble for chunks out of the enormous continent of Africa. The scramble had been so acquisitive that within forty years of our noble-hearted Livingstone's death the whole of Africa, with the small exception of Abyssinia, had fallen to the possession or "protection" of various European Powers, which were still snarling over the frontiers of their claims, and biting off outlying fragments where possible.

But behind these more obvious military, naval, and commercial motives urging us to the war, lay an undefined and obscure element of national suspicion and dislike. It was true the German people were by race and cast of mind nearly akin to ourselves, but family quarrels will sometimes occur. Queen Victoria's genuine passion for her German husband, her natural attachment to her eldest daughter, the mother of the reigning Kaiser, and her regard for German dynasties as supplying the consorts most available for her other children had maintained at least a tolerance of Germans among our ruling classes. But the people readily followed the leaning of the Queen's successor towards a nation which, though for centuries our natural "sweet enemy," was certainly sweet, whereas sweetness was not reckoned among the German qualities. English tourists in search of unaccustomed pleasures found German literature and the German comic papers far less alluring than the French, and far less stimulating to torpid sense. The German language was an obstacle to most, and few travelled far beyond the Rhine. German manners appeared distasteful, and when Germans

<sup>1</sup> This popular fallacy has been repeatedly exposed; and see Norman Angell's "Must Britain travel the Moscow Road;" Part I, Chapter 2.

began to assume a superiority which in former days had been claimed as the natural prerogative of our island race, it became apparent that pride must have a fall, if the warning of Scripture was to be fulfilled.

Many believed all the peculiar characteristics of Germans to be gathered up in the Kaiser, but they were wrong. His mother was only half a German, and she had introduced what Bismarck called "*die englische Krankheit*," or "rickets," into the German breed and policy. Perhaps owing to that admixture, the Kaiser gained an enviable versatility, an enviable energy, but he missed the characteristic German advantages of patience, thoroughness, and dogged limitation to one line of thought or action. Everything by turns or together—King by Divine Right, Supreme War Lord, authority upon Art, lecturer on Strategy, Master of Ceremonies, glorified Commercial Traveller—he appeared to diffuse rather than sum up the characters of his ancestors on both sides, and the diffusion invalidated his powers. In a remarkable essay published at the beginning of his reign (in 1891) a Portuguese writer, Eça de Queiroz, said of him :

"In my opinion he is nothing but a *dilettante* of activities—a man enamoured of activity, comprehending and feeling with unusual intensity the infinite delight it affords, and desiring to experience and enjoy it in every form permissible in our state of civilisation."

Added to all this was the Kaiser's unusual familiarity with God. At first he spoke of God as the Almighty ordering all things for German good, but gradually he came to regard Him rather as a military Ally, almost in the same sense as the aged Emperor of Austria was an Ally. One remembers his phrase, "Our old Ally of Rossbach," when he was assuring the Prussian officers of God's future aid. That insatiable desire to experience every form of activity, combined with a mistaken conviction that God would promote the success of his every undertaking, led him to disaster. But apart

from a belief in the Divine assistance such as our fathers freely claimed but few of us now dare to assert, what man among us would act very differently from the young Kaiser, if the same opportunities were his ? Give to anyone among us two highly gifted parents ; bring anyone of us up among great traditions of martial and imperial glory ; place him upon a throne in command of an army hitherto invincible, and over a people singularly submissive to authority, respecting all reigning families as the chief interest in social conversation, and always prostrate before a title ; concede the opportunity of indulging all the many-sided tastes that most people share—the greed for flattery, the love of knowledge, the lust of travel, delight in music and art, pleasure in society, the joy of drilling large bodies of men and making them move in harmony like an orchestra, the desire to benefit one's fellow creatures and cause them to love us for our benefits, and the passion for imposing one's will upon the world for the world's lasting good—place anyone among us in such a position, and who can swear that he would not behave very much as the young Kaiser, or a hind let loose, or a wild ass galloping over the desert ? That was why, when I saw the Kaiser, whether in Berlin or at an Aldershot review, or at Queen Victoria's funeral, I always thought to myself, “ There but for the grace of God go I.”

It is true that this versatile and energetic spirit degenerated during years of power and courtly adulation. After some fourteen or fifteen years we come to the “ Willy-Nicky ” letters, and how lamentable is the change ! Pitiful intrigue has encroached upon youthful frankness ; love of secrecy upon a love of publicity, once excessive ; malign distrust and hatred upon a disposition naturally open-hearted and alive to friendship. From boyhood, the temptation to military glory had always been strong. No matter what his philosophic father and highly cultured mother might say, the young prince was saturated with the conception of splendid war as the true field for the display of a ruler's genius. For years he struggled against the temptation. He

## WAR

desired to be known as the “*Friedenskaiser*,” much as his uncle Edward was sometimes known as “the Peacemaker.” He desired to prove his devotion to his country by promoting her industries, and he succeeded beyond the dreams of commerce. It was not till he was nearly fifty that he began to yield to the stress of temptation, from outside as well as from within. Up to the very last, even in Berlin, he maintained at least the appearance of struggle against it, though it cost him his popularity, and on that fatal day of August, as I watched him in his motor sweep along *Unter den Linden* through the wildly excited populace, the cheers for the “*Friedenskaiser*” were nothing to compare with the cheers for the Crown Prince, hailed as a thunderbolt of war. Yet the day had come—that day foretold by *Ecá de Queiroz* twenty years before, when “Europe would awake to the roar of clashing armies, because in the soul of the great *dilettante* the desire to know war, to enjoy war, was stronger than reason, counsel, or pity for his subjects.” How nearly prophetic was the writer’s conclusion!—

“If he win, he may have within and without the frontiers altars such as were raised to Augustus; should he lose, exile, the traditional exile in England, awaits him. . . . In the course of years (may God make them slow and lengthy!) this youth, ardent, pleasing, fertile in imagination, of sincere, perhaps heroic soul, may be sitting in calm majesty in his Berlin Schloss presiding over the destinies of Europe—or he may be in the Hotel Métropole in London, sadly unpacking from his exile’s handbag the battered double crown of Prussia and Germany.”<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the common fear of Germany’s increasing power at sea and in the commerce of the world, and in spite of the English dislike of Prussian and Imperial manners, many who called themselves Liberals were deeply concerned at the prospect of a military alliance with Russia. Owing to the cruel tyranny of the Tsardom, many of us had striven to the

<sup>1</sup> This remarkable analysis of the Kaiser’s character in youth was quoted in *The Times* of December, 1914. For a far more hostile estimate, written “after the event,” see “Kaiser William II,” by Emil Ludwig.

utmost of our opportunities to check the progress of that alliance since it originated (during the years 1906–1908) under the guise of the *Triple Entente*. Some of us who, like myself, had witnessed how incapable of organisation the Russian authorities of those days were, distrusted the alliance even in a military sense, and never put the smallest faith in the myth of that “Steam Roller,” which we knew was just as likely to roll backwards upon its own people as forwards upon the enemy; as indeed happened. When it became clear that Sazónov, the Russian Foreign Minister, and Sukhomlinov, the Russian War Minister, had actually begun the war on July 31 by ordering a general mobilisation without the Tsar’s knowledge, or even against his express command, we knew that the worst must be expected, and anyone with the smallest experience of Russian arms and politics ought to have known it too. But our dislike of finding our country in active alliance with so brutal a despotism as the Tsardom was stronger even than these apprehensions.<sup>1</sup>

From the first the German people had regarded the war as chiefly a conflict with Russia—another stage in the prolonged and enormous conflict between Teuton and Slav. The speech of Haase, the leader of the Socialists in the Reichstag, on the fateful 4th of August was significant. Only three speeches were made. The Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg said :

“The solemn hour that puts our people to the proof has struck. Our army is ranged on the field, our fleet is ready for war. Behind them stands the whole German people.”

Dr. Kaempf, President of the Reichstag, spoke, and then Herr Haase :

“Up to the last,” he said, “we have struggled for the maintenance of peace, especially for the sake of our brothers

<sup>1</sup> Professor Henry Elmer Barnes in “The Genesis of the World War,” maintains that the Russian mobilisation began on July 24 and became general on the 30th.

in France. Now we stand before the iron fact of war. We are threatened by the horrors of invasion. Our people and our future liberties are at stake. They will be lost under a victory of the Russian despotism, which is stained with the blood of the noblest personalities among its own people. To avert this peril, we must maintain the civilisation and independence of our own country. Therefore, we Socialists repeat what we have always asserted : in the crisis of danger we will not leave our nation in the lurch.”

When I was in Berlin during the first few days of the war, I realised, rather to my surprise, that it was the horror of a possible Slav invasion that loomed most terribly before the people’s minds, and having known something of Russians under the Tsardom, I could not but sympathise. As to the Germans themselves, among whom I had lived so long with amused contentment and homely pleasure, I could but echo what my spiritual friend, Goethe, once said of the French when patriotic detractors charged him with neglecting to write war-songs during Napoleon’s great invasion :

“ I have never shammed (*habe nie affectirt*) in my poetry. What I have not lived through, what has not touched me to the quick, I have never uttered in prose or verse. I made love songs only when I was in love. How could I have written songs of hate without hatred ? And between ourselves I didn’t hate the French, though I thanked God when we got rid of them. How could I to whom civilisation and barbarism are the only two differences of importance, hate a nation which is one of the most civilised on earth, and to which I owe so great a part of my own mental growth ?

National animosity in general is a peculiar thing. In the lowest degrees of civilisation it is always strongest and most violent. But there is a point where it vanishes altogether—where we stand, as it were, *above* the nations, and we feel the happiness or misery of a neighbouring people as though it were our own. That degree of civilisation suited my nature, and I had become firmly established in it long before I reached my sixtieth year.”<sup>1</sup>

When the appalling reality of war burst upon us, nearly

<sup>1</sup> “ Conversations with Eckermann ; ” March 14, 1830.

everyone longed to justify our cause, and most of us succeeded, whether with reason or without it. We were not great enough, I suppose, to stand, like Goethe and Romain Rolland, *above* the nations. Our sympathies were too deeply involved in the risks or losses of our own people, our own friends. But if national animosity is strongest in the lowest degrees of civilisation, the average degree of civilisation in this country was not high. Lamentable proof lay in the wrecking and plunder of German shops, the atrocious ill-treatment of old and respectable Germans as they were marched to internment camps, and the embargo laid upon German books and German music. Why, when Professor Einstein of Berlin published his Theory of Relativity, many papers asserted that he was a Swiss, because no man of genius could spring from Germany !

It was but natural that this blaze of national animosity should be fed and fanned by the bishops and clergy of the Established Church. A Church so closely attached to the State, so dependent upon State support, could hardly without dishonour fail to support the State in countervailing measure. Priests professing the Gospel of peace were placed in a difficult and unenviable dilemma, and I understood and pitied their perplexity. As I listened to their violent incitements, I often recalled the verses of Dryden upon their position :

“ How answering to its end a Church is made,  
Whose power is but to counsel and persuade !  
O solid rock on which secure she stands !  
Eternal home, not built with mortal hands !  
O sure defence against the infernal gate,  
A patent during pleasure of the State ! ”<sup>1</sup>

The last couplet fairly well expresses the situation of the State Church, and explains the trouble of priests, especially of bishops, who by nature and position were driven to stir all hearts to belligerent fury, and yet perhaps regarded as Divine the blessing bestowed upon peacemakers and the

<sup>1</sup> Dryden’s “ Allegory of the Hind and the Panther ; ” published 1687.

precept to love their enemies. Their wriggling contortions in attempting to reconcile patriotic imprecations with belief in the Christian verities amused rather than edified, but appeared to prove that the behests of Divinity must be interpreted as occasion demands.

Another class with whom I deeply sympathised was made up of the people whose temperaments or means of livelihood had been so dull that they welcomed the excitement of war as a stimulus to their benumbed or atrophied sensations. Horror is always attractive to the insensitive man or woman, as is proved by the crowds that gather to see a horse killed in the street or to "assist" at an execution. Scenes and even thoughts of bloodshed provide a thrill which, if not distinctly pleasurable, at least enlivens, and here was bloodshed upon a vast and imposing scale, not far away in China, but at the very doors of our country, involving the deaths, not of abstract foreigners, but of men like ourselves, often actually familiar by sight or reputation or friendship.

In this class were included large numbers of women ; for the life of women is usually more monotonous than ours, and their desire for change and excitement at least as great. Many, with eager benevolence, seized the opportunity of patriotic variety in nursing and other public services for which their feminine capacity specially adapted them. They thus combined the pleasures of unaccustomed heroism with the fulfilment of function, which in itself is the very definition of happiness. In a slightly different class, but equally deserving of sympathy, stood the numerous young women and girls who vaguely recognised that a great war threatened their hope and desire of motherhood. With natural allurements, they hung about the streets and encampments, longing for the embraces of a lover before it should be too late. But for the most part the young men were too deeply engrossed in their serious duties to pay much attention to these pitiful importunities, and though at one time there arose much kindly commiseration over "war babies," I believe few of that kind actually

"materialised"—if I may use an ungainly word that is here appropriate.

The motives of the young men and boys whom one used to see crowding in thousands around St. Martin's Church in Trafalgar Square and all other recruiting offices, were various. High among them stood the ambition of heroic endeavour, of the noblest service to a beloved country, and a longing to strike at enemies whom the clergy and the popular papers industriously instructed them to hate and fear. Added to this were the promptings of self-respect, and the apprehension of being taunted for cowardice, especially by women and girls, whose gifts of white feathers made life unendurable. Besides, as was the case of many women, the young men gladly welcomed an opportunity of escape from the monotonous tedium of work and marriage, or the still more tedious monotony of unemployment. The army brought a relaxation of habit, a freedom from responsibility, a deliverance from the torment of hesitation. There can be no "two minds" where obedience is all in all. The joys of the recruits for whom Kitchener called have been accurately described by a distinguished writer who himself dyed his white hair and, with splendid falsehood, joined up as an ordinary private. Speaking of the new recruit, he writes:

"All his maturity's worries and burdens seemed, by some magical change, to have dropped from him; no difficult choices had to be made any longer; hardly a moral chart to be conned; no one had any finances to mind; nobody else's fate was put in his hands, and not even his own. All was fixed from above, down to the time of his going to bed and the way he must lace up his boots. His vow of willing self-enslavement for a season had brought him the peace of the soldier which passeth understanding as wholly as that of the saint, the blitheness of heart that comes to both with their clarifying, tranquillizing acquiescence in some mystic will outside their own. Immersed in that Dantean repose of utter obedience the men slept like babies, ate like hunters, and rediscovered the joy of infancy in getting rather elementary bodily movement to come right."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Disenchantment," by C. E. Montague, p. 6.

Add to such joys the flattering promises that employers would keep his place open for him ; that he would live in a land fit for heroes ; and that women would welcome him back with every kind of honour and delight, ending in a climax of kisses, as sung on every platform ; and what young Briton could resist the attraction, the glamour of war ? For who was in those days cynic enough to foretell the lamentable deception awaiting all those promises ?

By myself, apart from the torture of patriotic anxiety, the first few months of the war were spent in chafing uncertainty and consequent depression. Lord Kitchener had always detested war correspondents, holding them to be "the curse of modern armies," as Wolseley had described them in the first edition of his " Soldier's Pocket Book." The War Office, it is true, drew up a book of " Regulations for Press Correspondents " in three parts, thirty-seven paragraphs, and six appendices. Major A. G. Stuart, of a Pathan Regiment, was appointed to organise us, and a better appointment could not have been made. For, though a stalwart Protestant from Ulster, he was indeed the " perfect gentle knight," gallant, courteous, sympathetic, and once a boy at my own school upon the Severn. He did all that man could do to assist us. He chose twelve out of our number with orders to hold ourselves ready to start the moment that Kitchener gave the word. He accompanied me personally to arrange our future mess, and even to hire a French cook for our service. He sent me the various orders as they issued from the War Office, and in strict obedience I purchased saddlery, camp-kit, and a horse, upon which for some weeks I desolately cantered up and down the riding tracks of Hampstead Heath. I engaged a servant from the staff of the *Daily News* office-boys, and when he went melancholy mad, I engaged another. Upon a counter-order I sold my horse at a profit of £2, and set about the purchase of a motor as instructed. Time after time it appeared certain that we should start. Generals French and Joffre both agreed to our going. All was ready, but Kitchener remained immovable. It was an

instance of that extraordinary man's main weakness. He could not depute authority, but, though overwhelmed beyond conception by the massive toil of the war, he must needs look into every detail for himself and would not trust the minor affair of correspondents even to so entirely trustworthy a man as Stuart.

Instead of employing men who had experienced many wars and much censorship, Lord Kitchener thought the people of England ought to be satisfied with the messages sent officially by an officer who signed himself "Eye-witness," and imagined he was fulfilling his duties during the most terrible war in which our country had ever been engaged by diffusing such news as the following :

" Within sight of the spot where these words are being penned the chauffeur of a General Staff motor-car is completing his morning toilet in the open. After washing hands and face in a saucepan *minus* handle, which he has balanced on an empty petrol-can, he carefully brushes his hair with an old nail-brush, using the window of the car, in which he has slept, as a looking-glass. From the backward sweep he gives to his somewhat long locks, and judging by his well-cut and clean, but dull, brogue shoes, it is clear that he has once been a 'knut,' in spite of his oil-stained khaki service jacket and trousers."

Or take another picture of warfare from the same despatch :

" At the dinner hour yesterday, in a house which, in ordinary times is a second-class café in a small country town, this trait (i.e. of resignation) was exhibited to a curious degree." (Here follows a long description of the house and kitchen and the officers having lunch.) " Quite unperturbed, amidst a cloud of flies, the 'patron,' his wife, and family, were discussing their own déjeuner with gusto, immersed in their own affairs and also in a shower of grease, for they were eating artichokes, each petal of which was first dipped in a bowl of melted butter and conveyed to the mouth with a flourish."

Such passages are perhaps worth preserving to show what an official correspondent is capable of, and what kind of stuff

—usually known in our profession as “tosh” or “hog-wash”—was palmed off upon the British people when sons, brothers, husbands, and lovers were dying daily, and the air seemed to vibrate with their departing souls.

Even Major Stuart's patience was exhausted at last, and on the last day of the year (1914) he abandoned his task as hopeless and joined the G.H.Q. at St. Omer as one of the Intelligence Officers. In the meantime, even the most obedient of us, like myself, had in despair taken to dashing over to France or Belgium, running about there at perpetual risk of being arrested and shot, and running back to London with far more news than our papers were allowed to publish. On these distracting terms I was present at Boulogne in the middle of August, and watched those noble “Old Contemptibles” landing. They formed the finest army that ever left our shores, or perhaps any shores—the men trained to perfection, the equipment faultless, the horses beautiful with their shining coats, their large, intelligent, and patient eyes—men and horses so soon to be destroyed. There, too, I saw the coffin of General Grierson, the strategist, who had died suddenly in a train, embarked among a guard of French Territorials and 200 of his own Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. Two or three times I was in Calais, sometimes sleeping in the station, sometimes in the tiny garret of a shoemaker who befriended me. Once I saw a host of refugees from Belgium trailing through the town with the customary bundles of bedding, food, and birdcages, and with them went the King of the Belgians on his way to Rouen. Another day I entered the old church of Calais, which I had so often welcomed as the sign that again I was in France, and there I found a strange service being held. From each column of the central arches supporting the old slated spire hung five tricolor flags. The choir was decorated with the Papal colours. The nave was crowded with old men and girls, who at regular intervals stretched out both arms, crying in unison, “*Sauve la France ! Sauve la France !*” and so continued for the space of an hour.

At another time Geoffrey Young (famous mountaineer and Eton master of former days, a poet, too, and later in the war destined to win distinction and to lose a limb upon the Italian front)—he and I contrived to reach Dunkirk from Calais, very narrowly escaping the fate of three Germans, who, disguised as British officers, had been shot as spies just before we arrived. In that ancient town, more Flemish than French, we found scattered English people seeking what service they might do—the beautiful Millicent, Duchess of Sutherland, organising a hospital; Captain Brandon, R.N., in command of the port, and raging against the ways of French officials (indeed the situation was difficult, for command of the whole district seemed hopelessly divided between French, British, and Belgians); and Dr. Hector Munro, most simple-hearted, most generous, and best beloved of all medical idealists, who had settled a hospital “Unit” in a priests’ college at Furnes, some twelve miles south-east. To that little city, beautiful with cathedral and seventeenth-century square, I was driven out, and was at once set to work upon an ambulance that wandered through roads and level fields deeply pitted with shell holes right up to the gates of Dixmude, which was flaming in several places, the bombardment being very severe (October 23). All the windows were broken, and the streets covered with shattered glass that crunched under our feet as we walked to the centre of the blazing town. Only dogs and goats were to be seen, searching in vain for their human friends. But Belgians still held the place, firing from the windows of the houses till the flames or shells drove them out. At the entrance to the town, near the bridge over the Yser, a private house had been converted into a dressing-station, and there the wounded were dragged in for the stanching of blood and the simple amputations, rapidly executed by two doctors, while two priests attended the dying.

Filling our ambulance cart with the due number of “cases,” Lady Dorothy Feilding and I drove them back to Furnes, and in the long ward there, as we passed from one

appalling sight of anguish to another, a nurse of some literary reputation said to me : "Would rulers make war if they saw this ?" And I could only reply, "Yes, they would."

Next day I drove out with the ambulance to Westende to collect the wounded from the neighbouring little town of Nieuport, near the mouth of the Yser. The town itself was being destroyed too rapidly for entrance, and even its pleasant "seaside resort" was under heavy fire. Large shells came crashing through the roofs of its lodging-houses, and upset the billiard tables in the casino. The gentle esplanade was strewn with bodies of the dead, and into the *salon* of one hotel the wounded were being carried. The attack was answered by four six-inch guns emplaced in the golf-link bunkers, while four more were concealed among the birch trees of the public garden. The resort had provided itself with everything conducive to the restoration of health, but over the long line of salutary bathing-machines, huge cones of iron were flying at a thousand miles an hour, flung from a great black ship that crept along the coast—broad in the beam, almost oval in shape, almost flat-bottomed—accompanied by two or three gliding destroyers. Those black and slowly moving ships were extending even beyond the limit set by the sea the grim line reaching to Switzerland along which the thunder of the guns never stopped by night or day. By day the line was marked by sudden white puffs like wool spurting flame or by vast splashes of black, and by night by flashes of yellow light, recurring faster than eyes can blink.

Watching that line of smoke or blinking flashes, to and fro upon their country roads, the inhabitants of the towns, villages, and farms continually moved in search of safety, bearing with them their children and baggage of selected goods. Upon the highest sandhills they stood in groups, waiting to see whether they could venture home for one more day or night. They saw their lanes and highways now crowded with dark blue men, lighter blue men with red trousers, mounted men whose dark cloaks partly concealed



LA PATRIE  
From a painting by C. R. W. Nevinson  
*By permission of Mr. Arnold Bennett*



carefully browned breastplates, and whose helmets had brown covers drawn over them, though the long horse-tail plumes hung down their backs as in Napoleonic pictures. They saw motor lorries, armoured cars, and ambulances herded in the familiar fields, and batteries of big guns seeking the shadow of willows along the riverside. And by day and night the thunder of imminent destruction never ceased.

On my return to London, I found that the *Daily News*, for which I was then chiefly working, and even Massingham, editor of the *Nation*, considered an account of war as it really is and always must be too horrible for the country to bear, and I resolved not to go out again unless authorised by the War Office or engaged upon some definite and practical work. Geoffrey Young made the same resolve, and we offered our assistance to a Quaker Ambulance Unit which was then just starting, for we thought that our knowledge of the ground and of the British and Belgian authorities might be useful, as it was. On our crossing with thirty Quaker youths we were passed by destroyers racing to the S.O.S. signal of a three-funnel cruiser, the *Hermes*, which had been torpedoed twice by a submarine, with an interval of 35 minutes. Imitating the crews of the destroyers, our youths showed fine eagerness and courage in saving life, and nearly all the cruiser's men were brought aboard except fifteen killed by the explosions. The body of a naval officer was committed to my charge to chafe and pummel, and I was so successful that after about half an hour's incessant labour upon him, he began to groan and cry and curse with the anguish of returning life, and I landed him in Dover almost completely restored ; for we had turned back with the saved.

When at last we reached Dunkirk, we were set at once to work night and day among the rows of wounded lying on straw in the long railway shed beside the quay.<sup>1</sup> Among

<sup>1</sup> These sheds suggested the picture called "La Patrie," by my son, C. R. W. N., who worked for this Quaker unit as hospital orderly and driver for some months before joining the Regular Army, and so gained his first experience of war. Later on, having been discharged from the

there were a few wretched German prisoners, all severely wounded, and left untended to rot with suppurating, stinking, and gangrened wounds. In spite of their atrocious condition, so strong was national hatred at the time that the French and Belgian surgeons refused even to look at them, and treated us to all manner of satiric abuse because we cleansed and bandaged the suffering limbs of "the enemy," who to us had become merely men. The French authorities even threatened to send the whole Quaker Unit home if we persisted in our humanity. I have never known British soldiers behave as others then behaved to helpless and suffering opponents, nor can I imagine it.

But, with their usual silent, unyielding, and exasperating meekness, the Quakers established our footing. By the help of the British Consul, Mr. Sarell, and his wife, I engaged an empty hotel at Malo-les-Bains close to the town ; and it served as head-quarters till it was bombed much later in the war, after the Quakers had sent outposts all along the Belgian frontier and had extended a branch to the Italian front, with the assistance of Geoffrey Young and George Trevelyan, the historian. It was whilst arranging this settlement with the Consul that I was suddenly brought face to face with Lord Kitchener, who had come over to consult upon some detail such as he loved. I had seen Lord Kitchener often in the South African War, and, through the kindness of Sir Ian Hamilton, had once conversed with him in Pretoria.<sup>1</sup> I had since seen him in India too. Now I saw him for the last time. He was always gigantic, but now had grown much heavier—not protuberant, but massive all over. His face was a deep red, heavily embossed, and so swollen at the eyelids that the eyes almost disappeared. He strode through the entrance door without a word, as one conscious, as well he might be, of his great record and his vital importance to the country

Army for rheumatic fever, he was selected as one of the official War Artists, and worked as such till the Armistice. Examples of his war work are now in the War Museum, the Tate Gallery, and the Luxembourg.

<sup>1</sup> See "Changes and Chances," p. 322.

that trusted him, and would have trusted no one else so well; for his reputation was of more value than himself. It was November 1st, 1914, and the fatal crash amid the storm beside the rocky coast of the Orkneys lay still more than nineteen months ahead.

Another scene of that time will not leave my memory. On November 2nd, the Inspector-General of the Belgian Army Medical told me he could not have the Quaker Unit in Dunkirk, but suggested Ypres, as being controlled by the British. In one of our own ambulances, Philip Baker (who commanded the Unit, and was then famous chiefly as a Cambridge runner, now for his service to the League of Nations)—he and Geoffrey Young and I lumbered through green Belgium till, at the entrance into Ypres a sentry of the Coldstream Guards told us that the Seventh Division had been wiped out, and mentioned certain well-known battalions that were reduced to fifty or a hundred men. At no great distance eastward the growling and roar of guns and rifles sounded in the coming night. We were directed to a convent laid out as a hospital, but destitute of patients owing to the increasing danger. The eighteen nuns, a priest, and a doctor were sleeping in a deep cellar, which they had barricaded to exclude even the air, and they generously offered us a share of the refuge. But we preferred the upper story.

At early dawn I went into the streets, and for the first time saw the famous city then still standing in all its beauty. In the big square, detachments of our men were gathered impatiently round small fires and camp-kettles, hoping there might still be time for breakfast.

But in the Hotel Châtelaine the medical and other staffs were hurriedly packing up, and as I stood at the door making enquiries for our proposed hospital, a huge shell ("Jack Johnson" or "Black Maria" as those shells were then called) crashed into the beautiful Cloth Hall and carried away a great chunk of the north-east corner. Another crashed into the Cathedral, which stood just behind the Cloth Hall, and I then

noticed that the towers of both buildings had been lately covered with scaffolding for necessary repairs, never to be necessary again. Shells were now falling with increasing rapidity, and, though polite and even genial, the Principal Medical Officer refused discussion, and I heard that the Kaiser, being with the German troops, had given orders to capture the city without delay. Suddenly a random battalion, made up of mixed and scattered details, came marching through the south end of the square, singing "Tipperary" as they came. I went with them out beyond the ancient walls and the moat that Marlborough knew, until we came to batteries trying to conceal themselves among the trees. Forward along the road—the Menin road, afterwards so famous—still singing "Tipperary," that confused little body of Englishmen advanced, straight towards the line of smoke and fire—*morituri*. It was the saddest sight I have known—that early morning of November 3rd. The "Ypres Salient" was being formed.

I was four or five times in Dunkirk with the Quaker Unit after that, and twice again got out to Ypres, watching its rapid ruin and the destruction of the *Sacré Cœur* hospital, where the Unit had been for a time established. Woeston and Boesinghe also I then came to know, and Dickebusch and the hill of Kemmel, against which the war was beginning to surge, and the more I saw of Quaker youth the more I admired it. But for the most part I was kept at home, speaking on the war, helping with drill, writing for the *Nation*, the *Daily News*, and *Votes for Women*, and otherwise eating my heart. At last in mid-January, 1915, some of us correspondents were politely invited by the French General Staff to visit the scenes of battles already ageing into history. With Ashmead-Bartlett, Sidney Low, the distinguished journalist and historian, Frederick Palmer, the American, whom I had known in the Balkan War, and a few others, I was taken along the valley of the Marne, and on to Nancy, where Titular King Stanislaus of Poland once ordered the

most beautiful of eighteenth-century courts to be erected for his temporary capital of Lorraine.<sup>1</sup>

All was peace or ruin there now, and we could wander at ease round the famous *Couronné de Nancy*, which, during the first twelve days of September, had been held by Castelnau with the 5th Army against four or five Army Corps under Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, as he strove in vain to burst through the gap between Toul and Epinal, and shatter the French right upon the Marne. Thus we stood at a turning-point—perhaps the main turning-point—of the war. From various heights around the semicircle of hills, we could look far up the Moselle valley. To the north-east Metz was just visible. East and south-east stood the Vosges, which I once knew so well. East across the Vosges was Strassburg, and close at hand lay Lunéville, where, in trying to thank the Commanding Officer, who gave us a three hours' lunch, I made the worst speech ever made in the language we call French.

Two other occasions interested me more : on the hill of Ste. Geneviève I found a battered old cross and shrine, with an inscription informing the traveller that “Here the brave Christian Jovin conquered the Barbarians from Germany in the Year of Our Lord 366 ;” and, again, in the utterly ruined village of Gerbèvillers I was introduced to the then celebrated Soeur Julie, a short, fattish, smiling woman of fifty, who, when the place was burning, stayed there with three other Sisters to look after some 300 wounded. Modestly delighting in her fame (for President Poincaré and the Prince of Wales had called to see her), she thoughtfully presented me with the little medal of the Virgin that Catholic girls wear at their First Communion.

Not to be outdone by French politeness, the War Office in March (1915) at last decided to send out small parties of correspondents, and appointed officers to lead us round the front. As throughout the war, the appointments were excellent. On this occasion (March 8 to 15), indeed, our

<sup>1</sup> See Carlyle's “Frederick the Great,” Book IX, Chapter XI.

officers were men of particular interest. First there was Major Stuart, late of the Pathans, whom I have already mentioned as a man of very unusual charm and ability. Then there was Captain J. C. Faunthorpe, once of Balliol, and a friend of George Steevens, the war correspondent of genius ;<sup>1</sup> afterwards in the Indian Civil Service, shy, reserved, and too thoughtful of nature to be very acceptable in the army, but afterwards to gain distinction in Washington and in India again. With him was Captain Reynolds, also an Oxford man and an Indian Civilian of high distinction since increased. And for the fourth we had Hesketh Prichard, gigantic in form, endlessly strong, a famous hunter in Patagonia, Newfoundland, Labrador, and other wild parts of the earth, but now since his death in action affectionately remembered chiefly as the best of "snipers" and teacher of "sniping" in the war.

We were quartered at the G.H.Q. in St. Omer, close beside the finest ancient church in the town. Attached to the General Staff there, I found some whom I had known in various scenes before, such as Nevil Macready, who had been on Sir George White's Staff in Ladysmith, and was now Adjutant-General to Sir John French ; George Fowke, who as a young Captain in the Sappers had blown up the Boers' "Long Tom" on Gun Hill at Ladysmith,<sup>2</sup> and was now Engineer-in-Chief to the Expeditionary Force ; Maurice Baring, whom I had known in Russia during the troubles of 1905-1906, and who was now serving as interpreter and generally useful man on the aerodrome under Colonel Sykes ; Sidney Roland, once of Toynbee Hall, now working upon the germ of "spotted fever," which was prevalent at that time, and of which he afterwards died ; and there were a good many more, besides Philip Gibbs and others who had been my colleagues in various lands.

But certainly the most remarkable man I met in those few days (for I saw Sir William Robertson, Chief of Staff,

<sup>1</sup> See "Changes and Chances," Chapter "Ladysmith."

<sup>2</sup> See "Changes and Chances," p. 242.

only in the distance) was Sir Henry Wilson, who had me to dinner in the "Liaison Department." I knew little about him at the time, but wrote of him that evening as :

"A very brilliant person, of wide international knowledge, said to have been the guiding spirit in all military diplomacy before the war; oldish in appearance though not old; thin, with a look of Mephisto; thrusting out his head and shrivelled neck like a vulture as he talked; entirely sceptical and cynical in mind, mocking at all human hopes and thought of 'progress'; rather theatrical in manner, but a man of genuine intellect. He evidently detests the present Government, and is said to have inspired the threatened army revolt about Ulster, for, like Stuart, who admires him immensely, he is an extreme Ulsterman. He talked a lot about the Balkans, which he knows at least as well as I do, and about politics and the war; especially about the proposed expedition to the Dardanelles, to which I think he is strongly opposed. He suddenly asked me what I thought of a naval attack upon the Gallipoli peninsula, and I replied that, speaking as a mere layman, I could see no great advantage unless troops were landed. 'You are right,' he answered; 'a naval attack has never been of any use alone.' "

'There was something so "daemonic" about his personality that I remember the conversation very distinctly. But I never met him again, though seven years were to pass before two Irish Republicans shot him on his doorstep in London.

For the rest, the officers commanding the various H.Q. departments gave us admirable lectures upon the meaning and methods of each, revealing the incalculable amount of brains and energy required to kill the enemy in sufficient numbers—the mapping and observation, the Intelligence, the munition supply, the remounts (19,000 horses had already been lost), the discipline (including executions), the dressing-stations and hospitals, the post, the payment to peasants, the billeting and the cleansing. At Nieppe we saw the men wallowing twenty together in the round vats of a jute works, and were shown a vest so thick with dead lice that hardly any of the original fabric could be seen, and

the man who displayed it to us appeared to regard it with the admiring awe due to the Holy Coat of Trier. But what has often interested me most is the supply of food—the “commissariat,” just the necessities for eating ; and at the rail-head of Caistre I saw the train arrive with 105 tons of human food, with hay and oats, required daily just for three brigades and divisional troops. If the leaders of the nation would organise and work for peace as the G.H.Q. were then working for war ! But vain is the thought ; so let it perish.

Up and down, from end to end of that French and Flemish land which Ralph Mottram and C. E. Montague have described so vividly in “The Spanish Farm” and “Rough Justice,” Stuart himself or one of the other notable officers conducted me. For the first time I looked over the wide-spread levels of fertility from the ancient town of Cassel, and for the first time I was in Bailleul, seeing its beautiful little square and the fifteenth-century town hall still untouched, whereas at the end of the war I found the whole town a heap of rubble and shattered rafters, not to be recognised but for a board painted with its name. And for the first time I passed through Marlborough’s Hazebrouck ; and again was delightfully welcomed by the Quaker youths who were trying to remain in Poperinghe and Ypres, already half ruined. And in a shady dell near Loire we saw the first shot fired from a vast 15-in. howitzer, called “Grand-mother” (68 ton was the weight of the gun, 1450 lbs. the weight of the shell, which flew seven miles on to the visible ridge called “Whitesheet”). And down the valley of the Lys we passed through Aire, Merville, and Armentières, and southward again to Bethune and the belfry of Beuvry from which the belfry of La Bassée was just visible, and the railways that made the deadly “Triangle.” But to the neighbouring Neuve Chapelle we were not allowed to approach any nearer, though the guns were thundering there from the day of our arrival. For those were the days of the terrible slaughter, when, I believe, for the first time the method was

tried of preparing for the infantry attack by a continuous barrage of shells in the hope—a vain hope—that sufficient gap might be cut in the German circle of “siege defence” to allow of a definite and permanent breach.

I was told at the time that, though we won the ruins of the village, there was no real gain, and our casualties in killed and wounded were 12,000. I was also privately shown an official account which said that our wounded had to be left outside the wire at one place, and were there bombed to death. Nothing—nothing at all—is too horrible for war. Threats and realities will never have the smallest effect in preventing or ending it. In five weeks after our visit ended the Germans began using poison gas against the Ypres salient. At Loos in the following September, the British used gas for the first time. Thus a new and far more terrible method of warfare was instituted and accepted. Before the end of the war it was recognised that, with the help of aeroplanes, poison gases would wipe out whole cities and their populations, while bombs of delayed action would obliterate all the wonders of architecture, art, and visible civilisation. But the horror of these certain prospects has made each country only the more anxious to have destruction ready for its civilised neighbours, and to be quick about it.

My own protests in the papers against the use of poison gas at the time were of course received with ridicule, especially by a literary gentleman who, snugly sheltered in Devon, strangely described me as “Our ethical expert in comfort and safety at home.” Indeed, I was wrong in raising any protest. For, after all, if you are out for slaughter, gas is as good a means of killing as any other, though more painful than other modern means, except the bayonet. And as to “honour,” mercy, “sportsmanlike” action, and the sparing of civilians, women, and children, such notions are obsolete and should be forgotten, except in history lectures. All I could do in London was to watch and encourage Hertha Ayrton, the distinguished physicist, as she developed her well-known invention of the Ayrton Fan to expel gas from

trenches or to drive it back in the open by the action of vortices. It was an invention that saved many lives, and would have saved many more, but for the delays of the War Office in recognising its value, and but for the difficulty of inducing the men to undertake the short and easy practice needed for the use of "the flappers" under instruction.<sup>1</sup>

Except for a rush to Bâle in May with Henry Harben to rescue £20,000 of his property in "bearer bonds" from a Swiss Bank there, I was then compelled to remain in London, doing what work I could, with restless dissatisfaction : for I felt that my place was not there. Early in April I heard proposals to send me to the Dardanelles to represent the *Manchester Guardian* and all the provincial papers combined, and I eagerly welcomed them. But at first I was put off by disagreements among the editors, and later by the well-known troubles at the Admiralty ; for at that time the very few correspondents for the Dardanelles were selected by the Admiralty and came under that control. In May those troubles led to the resignation of Lord Fisher as First Sea Lord and of Mr. Winston Churchill as First Lord of the Admiralty, giving place to Mr. Arthur Balfour in a Coalition Government. Week after week the delays continued, only interrupted by hopes deferred, until at last (June 22nd) Sir Ian Hamilton, who had known me in Ladysmith and Pretoria, personally desired that I should be sent. After further official delays I started on the journey (July 4th), late, but not too late for that gallant and tragic campaign.

<sup>1</sup> See "Hertha Ayrton," by Evelyn Sharp ; Chapter XVIII.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DARDANELLES

*“ Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,  
Doing or suffering.”*

“ Paradise Lost ”; Book I.

*Beside the ruins of Troy they lie buried, those men so beautiful. There  
they lie in their graves, hidden in an enemy’s land.*

“ The Agamemnon ”; 453–455.

THE drama of the Dardanelles campaign has been told and criticised with such minuteness by many admirable writers that I may limit my story to my own personal experiences during my presence upon that memorable scene.<sup>1</sup> On the general subject, I need mention here only that the idea—originating with Mr. Winston Churchill—of striking direct at Constantinople appeared to myself at the time, and still appears, the most brilliant strategic conception of the war. For, if the stroke had been successful, Turkey would have fallen paralysed, and the sally-port of the Central Powers through the Turkish possessions would have been closed; danger would have been averted from Egypt, the Persian Gulf, and India; the Russian forces in the Caucasus would have been released

<sup>1</sup> The first-hand authorities known to me are: Sir Ian Hamilton’s “ Gallipoli Diary ;” the Dardanelles Commission Report (Parts I and II); Major-General Callwell’s “ The Dardanelles ” (from the War Office); John Masefield’s “ Gallipoli ;” Douglas Jerrold’s “ The Royal Naval Division ;” Major Bryan Cooper’s “ The Tenth Division in Gallipoli ;” C. E. W. Bean’s “ Official History of Australia in the War ” (Vol. I and II on Anzac); Phillip Schuler’s “ Australia in Arms ;” The Rev. O. Creighton’s “ With the Twenty-ninth Division in Gallipoli ;” Commander A. J. Stewart’s and the Rev. C. J. E. Peshall’s “ The Immortal Gamble ;” Dr. Harry Stürmer’s “ Two Years in Constantinople ;” Lewis Einstein’s “ Inside Constantinople ;” Henry Morgenthau’s “ Secrets of the Bosphorus ;” Ashmead-Bartlett’s “ Dispatches from the Dardanelles,” his “ Uncensored Dardanelles ” (1928); and my own book “ The Dardanelles Campaign ” (1918).

for action elsewhere ; the neutrality of Bulgaria and other Balkan States would have been secured ; Serbia would have been delivered from fear of attack upon her eastern frontier, and Roumania from similar apprehension along the Danube and in the Dobrudja ; the influence of Venizelos in Greece would have been confirmed ; King Constantine aided in resisting his military, financial, and domestic temptations ; and Russia would have been enabled to concentrate her entire forces upon her western frontiers from the Memel to the Dniester, besides receiving reinforcements of munition from ourselves, and supplying the Alliance with Ukrainian wheat. Blockaded by the Allied fleets in the Adriatic, and by the British fleet in the Channel and the North Sea, the Central Powers would then indeed have found themselves encircled by an iron ring, and it seems likely that the terms which our Alliance professed as the objects of the war might have been obtained in the spring of 1916. In May, 1808, Napoleon said : “At bottom the great question is—Who shall have Constantinople ?” Steam and the Suez Canal have weakened the force of that saying, but even in 1915 it might still have been considered by the most dogmatic “Westerner.” And in fact it was upon the Eastern front that the hope of our ultimate victory dawned at last.

For the reasons mentioned at the end of the last chapter (the upset in the Admiralty owing to the difference between Lord Fisher and Mr. Churchill), I was prevented from starting for the Dardanelles till Sir Ian himself sent for me towards the end of June. A few days later I found myself travelling out with the King’s Messenger, Colonel Charles Burn, M.P. for Torquay, a fine type of the Tory gentleman, so polite, so alive to the obligations of inequality. We passed through Rome, and then were detained among the earthquake ruins of Messina, which showed that “Nature” can rival even mankind in violent and purposeless destruction. Thence to Athens, and so in a little launch past the island of Scyros, already sacred to Rupert Brooke, and to the sea between Imbros and Cape Helles, where one of the desultory

battles of mid-July was thundering in the vain attempt to penetrate the Turkish trenches drawn across the peninsula to bar our approach to the windmills of Krithia and the squat pyramid of Achi Baba hill.

I was landed upon the island of Imbros, at the sandy part of Kephalos promontory, where Sir Ian Hamilton had pitched his Headquarter tents, removing from the H.Q. ship *Arcadian* chiefly to avoid the German submarines which had arrived in May. He himself lived in a little wooden hut, connected by cable with Cape Helles, Anzac, and afterwards with Suvla Bay, so that from that point he could command all three positions. From no other situation was this possible. It is true that, in a destroyer, Suvla could be reached in less than an hour, and Helles in half the time, but I cannot doubt that absence from the actual scenes of conflict often embarrassed the General's plans, and was a perpetual irritation to his personal feelings. For from the time of Majuba Hill, where his left hand was shattered, Sir Ian had always retained so much of the regimental officer's disposition that he felt restless and unsatisfied unless he were himself in the front line. Whenever his presence was not absolutely required at G.H.Q., he was to be found walking about the trenches on the peninsula, and General Braithwaite, his Chief of Staff, had difficulty in averting a death that would have elated the enemy.

Having known him during the terrific engagement on Cæsar's Camp in Ladysmith (Jan. 6, 1900) and at the fighting on Diamond Hill near Pretoria, I always regarded him as an example of the rare type which not merely conceals fear with success, as most Englishmen can, but actually does not feel it. From a mingled Highland and Irish descent he had inherited so-called Celtic qualities which the solid-bred Englishman contemplates with varying admiration and dislike. Undoubtedly he was deeply tinged with that "Celtic charm"—that glamour of mind and courtesy of behaviour which create suspicion among people endowed with neither. Through his nature ran a strain of the idealistic spirit which

some despise as quixotic, and others salute as chivalrous, while both parties, with cautious solicitude, avoid it in themselves. Some of us were also aware that Sir Ian was susceptible to the influence of beauty in other forms than those by common consent conceded to military men. We acknowledged him as a master of English prose, and though the English people read more in quantity than any other nation, the literary gift is regarded among us as a sign of probable incapacity, and not, as in France and ancient Greece; as an assurance of far-reaching powers. What was still worse, Sir Ian was known to have written poetry.<sup>1</sup>

Remembering old South African days, the Commander-in-Chief received me with generous amiability, but expressed deep indignation at the behaviour of a quasi-civilian who had lately been home on leave and by his hostile criticism of the campaign had spread despondency among leading men in the War Office and Cabinet. Within the sandy G.H.Q. encampment I met a good many former friends ; among them Robert Graves, who, as Consul-General in Salonika, had so greatly assisted the Brailsfords and me in our attempt at Macedonian Relief (1903) ;<sup>2</sup> and William Maxwell, who had been my colleague as war correspondent in Ladysmith and in the Balkan War of 1912, and was now appointed my censor, on the principle of "set a thief to catch a thief," but also, one might hope, for his knowledge both of war and journalism. With them I found Wyndham Deedes, whom I had to some small extent helped to rescue from permanent internment in Berlin when we escaped in the Ambassador's train after war was declared,<sup>3</sup> and who has since done such conspicuous service in Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, and East London. Fresh to me at that time was the acquaintance of Compton Mackenzie, the novelist, who was working with "The Intelligence," and had occasionally acted as war correspondent at Helles ; a slim, pale, keen-faced man,

<sup>1</sup> See "The Dardanelles Campaign ;" p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> See "More Changes More Chances ;" p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> See *Ibid* ; p. 412.

obviously much of an artist, mind and eyes going full gallop, and talking with a copious selection of exact words, whether for humorous, satiric, or poetic speech. As being a novelist, he was soon afterwards sent to Mityleni to diffuse the fiction that a landing was intended upon the Asiatic coast opposite Lesbos. He was instructed to pledge everyone he told of it to the utmost secrecy, in the hope that gossip might then propagate the news. But unhappily he confided this vital information to English people only, and the secret of the phantom assault has remained honourably hidden to this day.

The long and sandy spit of Kephalos forms with the main island a large but unserviceable bay, shallow and fully exposed to the north wind ; and there some of the large "monitors" (awkward platforms for one 15-in. gun apiece, and having a wide, projecting rim all round the water-line) were always anchored, together with a few smaller monitors ("whippets"), a cruiser or two, and North Sea trawlers carrying supplies over to the peninsula. The *Queen Elizabeth* had been sent home as being too valuable to risk when the German submarines came into action. Ashmead-Bartlett, correspondent for the London papers, always provident for comfort, had rightly selected a place for our camp some distance inland so as to gain the shelter of a few large trees during the intolerable heat of midday, but thence to G.H.Q. was a long journey. If one just caught a boat running across the bay from the island landing-stage to G.H.Q. pier, it was all right ; but otherwise one had a tramp along the curving shore, and I walked the three or four miles each way two or three times a day so often that I began to know not only every shrub and shell upon the toilsome sand, but every deposit of onions, tinned meat, unpeeled potatoes, and other refuse flung out from the ships in defiance of the British taxpayer. Still, our national finances were not entirely wasted ; for the natives inhabiting three small hamlets that stood, squalid with poverty, just beyond our camp at the foot of the mountains, collected these crumbs of riches as

delightful variations in the hard monotony of their daily sustenance.

Imbros itself is the most beautiful of Aegean islands, and the further you penetrate among its craggy mountains, the more beautiful it becomes. Near the other or western coast stand three largish villages, rich, as Greek villages go, in maize, vines, fig trees, and olives. The largest of these is Panaghía ("All Saints") and about two miles beyond it lies the crumbling little port called Kastro, like other relics of Rome. It is dominated by a ruined castle into which slabs of pure white marble have been built, remnants of some Greek temple that stood there before Rome or Saints were known. I have found little reference to Imbros in Greek history or literature, but once a British Staff officer whom I met in one of the valleys astounded me by quoting in Greek a passage from Sappho about it ; or about Lemnos, he was not sure which. I have been unable to find the passage, and knowing Staff officers as I do, I am inclined to think that this one must have been some ancient god who perhaps had known Sappho herself and heard the exquisite verses from her own lips.

The whole island is indeed a haunt fit for rugged and pastoral gods. The interior is uninhabited, its deep water-courses filled with flowering oleander and the aromatic herbs which bestow upon Mediterranean islands a wild delight. In the few pauses of the campaign it was a joyful relief to walk or ride over the rugged pass that leads from Kephalos Bay across the island to Panaghía. For looking back from the summit, one could see the whole of the Gallipoli peninsula, the Dardanelles strait with the plain of Troy beyond, and far in the distance the grey heights of Mount Ida and the mountains of Mityleni. In front, near at hand across a narrow water, rose the vast red pile of precipitous Samothrace, a natural home of savage mysteries. And then descending I would come at last to Panaghía, where a little restaurant had been fitted out, and, as a careless god myself, I could enjoy the octopus stewed in onions and tasting like

a line of Aristophanes, to say nothing of the amber wine of Greece, which is like mildly intoxicating furniture polish, fragrant with resin.

With me in our little camp was Lester Lawrence of Reuter's, a quietly courageous and reserved man, with whom in leisure moments I could discuss poetry, metaphysics, and the principles of government. And there too was Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, whom I had known six years before in Morocco, and again in Flanders at the beginning of this war. About him hung an atmosphere of magnificence that often astonished me, as when, among the rocks of that savage island, among the pigs and sheep that infested our camp searching for the last leaves and grapes of summer in a vineyard hard by, he would issue from his elaborately furnished tent dressed in a flowing robe of yellow silk shot with crimson, and call for breakfast as though the Carlton were still his corporeal home. Always careful of food and drink, he liked to have everything fine and highly civilised about him, both for his own sake and for the notable guests whom he loved to entertain. Yet in moments of crisis he could display an incalculable energy that carried him through days and nights of hardship, which he detested as he detested walking on foot and all routine. He might have made a good officer if he had been always in command, but being clever beyond question, he had a way of loudly criticising the conduct of campaigns with an assurance that sometimes secured excessive respect from all but the Commander-in-Chief. He was a vivid and industrious writer, and, for an impassioned card-player, he had read a good deal, especially of prose such as Gibbon's, much of whom he could repeat by heart, or shamelessly burlesque. Association from boyhood with the rich and great had given him a proud self-confidence and a self-centred aspect of the world, but his scornful and often antagonizing wit made him a difficult, though attractive, companion in a camp.

We were only three, for two other correspondents, who had come out with me, were obliged by sickness soon to return

home. But we had frequent visits from the two Anzac correspondents, who were allowed dug-outs among their countrymen on the peninsula—Malcolm Ross, eminent as a mountaineer, with the New Zealanders, and C. E. W. Bean with the Australians, of whose actions during the war he is still (1928) engaged upon writing the official history. And no one could be more capable of writing it, for his industry in collecting facts was inexhaustible, while his military judgment and his “eye for country” fitted him for a position as Chief-of-Staff, or even higher command. Always lavishly generous of his knowledge, and possessing a rare gift of instruction, he at once guided me through the complicated trenches at Helles, and over the still more difficult and confusing cliffs and valleys of Anzac. So it was that through his untiring assistance I rapidly gained a sufficient knowledge of the situation at both points of our attack.

Other visitors we entertained from time to time—Lord Howard de Walden (who superintended the little landing-stage), and many naval or military friends of Ashmead-Bartlett. But to me the most welcome of all the officers was Aubrey Herbert, whose name I already knew through his interest in the Balkans, especially in Albania. I now found in him one of the best companions, full of interesting knowledge, sensitive but self-restrained, resolute in his startling opinions, but always polite, always solicitous to please. He called himself a Tory, and I suppose he must have been the kind of Tory that I am myself. For if all Tories were like him, there would be no place for a Labour Party, still less for a Liberal, and the opposing politicians in Parliament might lie down together like the lions and lambs of heaven. His discussions with me as we sailed across to Anzac in a trawler were often so fascinating to myself that even in the roughest weather I was sorry when we put to land in Anzac Cove. A little way up the cliff above the Head-quarters there, he had constructed a dug-out, which he often invited me to share, and once I lived there for some time while he was away on a mission; for he was attached in some capacity

to the "Intelligence." One of his few startling opinions with which I could not agree was his peculiar affection for the Turks—peculiar, I mean, in a man of his knowledge and humanity, though not in the London Society which he frequented. Being a man of utterly reckless courage, he would even climb over the top of the trenches to succour or drag in some wounded Turk whom he heard groaning outside. I believe he would have done the same for any suffering animal, but the fact that the sufferer was a Turk made the venture more alluring. He was indeed an extraordinary man—the kind of person that ordinary people call crazy, because he is extra-ordinary. To the loss of the world he died on September 26, 1923.

The first three weeks I spent in wandering about the famous scenes of Helles and Anzac, thus obtaining a fairly complete knowledge of both positions. I was just in time to see General Hunter-Weston, before he was compelled by ill-health to leave the field of his exploits at Helles, where he had commanded the celebrated 29th Division at the landings and afterwards the VIIIth Army Corps.

At Helles, too, I was generously received by General Paris, commanding the Royal Naval Division, and by General W. R. Marshall, commanding the 87th Infantry Brigade, who welcomed me to his side at the mess lunch instead of having me shot as a spy in accordance with the wishes of a subordinate officer. And at Anzac I frequently met that model of all soldierly spirit, General Birdwood (inevitably known as "Birdie"), then commanding the Anzac Army Corps, but difficult to recognise owing to his cheerful habit of visiting the trenches in nothing but a grey flannel shirt and shorts. With him was Colonel A. Skeen, redoubtable Chief of Staff, and up on the heights, I used to meet General H. B. Walker, who had been at Shrewsbury School with me, and was surrounded with Shrewsbury boys. On the death of General Bridges he had succeeded to the command of the Australian Division, and Colonel C. B. B. White, famous among Staff officers, was then serving as his Chief of Staff.

A little further along the Anzac position (which at that time was barely three miles long by barely one deep) I would meet General Alexander Godley, commanding the New Zealanders, with several officers of great name under him, of whom I came to know best General A. H. Russell, Colonel Monash, and Colonel Bauchop, who then had but three weeks to live.

But to give some impression of the situation upon the peninsula during the latter half of July, I may repeat a few notes that I wrote down at the time. One day I had been staying on the wreck of the *River Clyde*, which was left where she was run aground at "V Beach" for the terrible landing of April 25th, and was a fairly safe position because the Turkish big guns on the Asiatic coast usually fired right over her, knowing that thus they would land the shells on "W Beach," where greater damage might be done. My former ally in the Suffrage movement, Lieutenant Cather, R.N., who had displayed the utmost gallantry when his ship, the *Goliath*, was sunk and he gave up his own lifebelt to a drowning sailor, was then in command, and his ship was to me often a city of refuge. During a visit there after having spent long hours chiefly in the lines of the 42nd (E. Lancs) Division, I wrote :

"Starting from 'W Beach' (Lancashire Landing, at the extreme point of Cape Helles) you struggle through dust clouds, 'left shoulder up,' till you find one of the dusty white tracks by which Krithia villagers used to visit the fortress town of Seddel Bahr at the entrance to the Straits. One passes through what was lately a garden of wild flowers, fields, vineyards, and scattered olive trees, but is now the desolation that people make and call war. It has become a wilderness of mounds and pits and trenches, of heaped-up stores and rows of horses stabled in the open, of tarpaulin dressing-stations behind embankments of carts and waggons continually on the move, of Indian muleteers continually striving to inculcate human reason into mules. Except for a few surviving trees, hardly a green thing remains. Over all this wilderness a cloud of dust sweeps perpetually, and on the results of war flies multiply with a prosperity unknown to them before."

"Passing the Headquarters of the 42nd Division, I entered a shallow nullah, rather safer than the open track ; for the whole of the open ground right away from Cape Helles is exposed to shell fire. The peculiarity of this water-course is that water is visible in it—a trickle of filthy greenish water unfit for washing or drinking. But still the men wash where it has settled down in the large holes made by 'Jack Johnsons' or 'Black Marias' which have pitched in its bed.

"One point where the watercourse divides is inevitably called Clapham Junction, but Lancashire names have been given to the main trenches and dumps. Burnley, Warrington and Accrington name the narrow clefts which are the homes of Lancashire men, and a long communication trench, constructed by the Turks with extraordinary ingenuity, has now become Wigan Road. Like all this part of our position, that trench was captured in the fighting of June 4-6, relics of which, in the shape of the dead who cannot be reached for burial, still lie exposed in certain places among our own lines, so keen is the watch of the Turkish sniper.

"Through periscopes, or by raising my eyes for a few seconds above the parapet (for I found that it is hard to judge distances through a periscope), I could see the Turkish black and white sandbags only forty or fifty yards in front, and trace the long lines and mazes of trenchwork round the base of Achi Baba. Holes through the tops of the periscopes proved the vigilance of the Turkish outlook, and in passing certain points I was glad that I had practised running at school.

"The rifle fire was not very frequent. Shells kept flying over our heads, but only to burst far away upon the wilderness or on 'W Beach.' Except during an attack, the firing-line is not the most dangerous part of the peninsula. In the midday heat, the men who were not 'standing to,' were quietly engaged in cooking or eating their dinners. They cooked upon little wood fires lighted in holes scooped out of the trench side, and their tin 'canteens' served for cooking pots and plates.

"So there these sons of Lancashire stood, almost naked in the blaze of sun, jammed between high walls of white and parching marl ; some were crouching in any corner of shade that could be found, some were engaged upon war's invariable occupation of picking lice off the inside of their clothes. I don't know what work they had been doing before the war—weaving, spinning, mining, smelting, I don't know what—but they were at an unaccustomed work now, and yet how

quickly they have adapted themselves to so strange a life in so strange a land ! ”

Then as to Anzac : on one of my visits to “ Quinn’s Post,” a specially dangerous point on the summit of the steep cliff that marked the most advanced line of the Australian position, Colonel Malone, who had taken over command when Quinn was killed there, told me in his jolly way that “ the whole Art of War consisted in the exercise of the domestic virtues,” and in accordance with this fine principle he always demanded that the place should be kept scrupulously clean, uniforms repaired, rations cooked as punctually as possible, and perpetual provocation confronted with humorous endurance. He was a man of singularly attractive personality, destined to death in his gallant attempt to hold the summit of Rhododendron Ridge on Sari Bair, above Anzac, August 8th. One day, after hearing his favourite maxim of war (borrowed perhaps from M. Bergeret), I wrote :

“ So here the Anzacs live, practising the whole art of war. Amid dust and innumerable flies, from the mouths of little caves cut in the face of the cliffs, they look over miles of sea to the precipitous red peaks of Samothrace and the grey mountains of Imbros. Up and down the steep and narrow paths, the Colonials arduously toil, like ants which bear the burdens of their race. Uniforms are seldom of the regulation type. Usually they consist of bare skin dyed to a deep reddish copper by the sun, tattooed decorations (a girl, a ship, a dragon), and a covering that can hardly be described as ‘ shorts,’ being much shorter. Every kind of store and arm has to be dragged or ‘ humped’ up these ant-hills of cliff, and deposited at the proper hole or gallery. Food, water, cartridges, shells, building timber, guns, medical stores—up the tracks all must go, and down the tracks the wounded come.

“ So the practice of the simple life proceeds, with greater simplicity than a Garden Suburb can boast, and the domestic virtues which constitute the whole art of war are exercised with a fortitude rarely maintained upon the domestic hearth.”

On the night of July 22–23, a special attack was expected

at Anzac to celebrate the anniversary of the "Constitution" proclaimed by the Young Turks in 1908, and rumour spoke of large reinforcements crossing the Narrows from the Asiatic coast. Accordingly I went up with Bean to the point in the front line where attack seemed most probable, and next day I wrote :

" It was Ramazan, and the sacred moon, three-quarters full, gave light for climbing the precipitous cliffs. By eleven I was at the highest point. Through deeply cut saps and 'communications,' the work of Australian miners, the way runs in winding labyrinth, and the length of sap and trench comes to much over a hundred miles. The point I reached had served for a machine-gun emplacement, but that evening it was watched by a Sikh sentry, who stood in the shadow, silent as the shadow. Mounted on the firing-step, I looked over the sandbag parapet upon a peculiar scene.

" Far on my right lay the sea, white with the pathway of the setting moon. Up from the shore ran the lines of our position. Close outside the lines, north, south, and east, the Turks stood hidden in their trenches—25,000 to 35,000 of them, as estimates say—and all the time they kept up a casual rifle fire. Some six miles away, in the centre of the peninsula south, I could see the long and steep position of Kilid Bahr plateau where the Turks drill new troops daily, and three or four miles still further away rose the dangerously gentle slopes and the low flat summit of Achi Baba. Beyond it gleamed the sudden flashes of Turkish and British guns defending or assaulting the sand-blown point of land between Krithia and Cape Helles. Sometimes, too, a warship's searchlight shot a brilliant ray across the view.

" At one o'clock the moon set in a deep red haze over the sea. But still nothing happened. The enemy merely kept up a casual fire against our sandbags, shaking the sand down upon my face as I lay upon a kind of shelf in the parapet. Then suddenly, just on the stroke of two, an amazing disturbance arose.

" Every Turk who held a rifle or commanded a machine-gun began to fire as fast as he could. From every point in their lines arose such a din of rifle fire as I have seldom heard, even at the crisis of a great engagement. It was one continuous blaze and rattle. From a gap in the parapet I could see the sharp tongues of flame flashing all along the edges,

like a belt of jewels. Minute followed minute, and still the incomprehensible din continued. Now and again one of our guns flung up a shell which burst like a firework into brilliant stars, as though to ask, ‘What on earth is the matter with you?’ Now and again another gun threw a larger shell which came lumbering up ‘Shrapnel Gully’ with a leisurely note, to burst crashing among the enemy’s trenches. And still the roar of rifles and machine-guns went on incessantly, and still nothing occurred. Suddenly, after just a quarter of an hour, the tumult ceased, with as little reason as it began.

“When the storm subsided, we and the Turkish snipers settled down again to normal relations, and all was star-lit peace. At half-past three the phantom of false dawn died into daylight, and the men who had been ‘standing to’ all night sank to sleep in the bottom of the trenches. Picking my way over them, I climbed down the yellow and slippery cliffs again to my cavern beside the sea. General Birdwood told me afterwards that, as an attack had been expected that night (spies so reported), not a single man in the Anzac force had gone sick. It is one of the domestic virtues not to go sick at a crisis.”

One afternoon (July 19) as I was tramping the weary sands of Kephalos Bay back to our little camp, I met Sir Ian Hamilton riding to his Headquarters, which I had just left. He stopped and gave me various information about the troops and the situation, but added that he had in mind a great design which he so far kept secret even from his Corps Commanders. He referred to the coming prolonged struggle generally known as “Suvla Bay,” though it should more appropriately be called “Sari Bair.” For Sir Ian’s design was to make the main attack upon the central Sari Bair range of mountain overlooking Anzac, supported on the left by the new reinforcements landed at Suvla Bay, while the VIII<sup>th</sup> Corps at Helles detained the Turks in their impregnable trenches before Krithia and the hill of Achi Baba. If the summits of the Sari Bair range could be reached and held by the Anzac Corps under Birdwood, the deadlock—almost a siege—at Helles and Anzac would be relieved, the Turks upon the Helles end of the peninsula would either

have to go or be cut off. The combined forces from Suvla and Anzac could then descend to the Straits at Maidos, and the Narrows would be open to the fleet. It was an admirable design, defeated only by three unexpected impediments—the extreme complexity of the approaches to Sari Bair, almost impenetrable by a night attack ; the delaying inertia at Suvla ; and a mere mistake in time or command —the bombardment of the 6th Gurkhas and the 6th South Lancashires, apparently by our own guns, just as they had joyfully reached the summit of the range and were chasing the Turks down the reverse slope.

At intervals in July, three Divisions of reinforcements began to arrive—the 13th (Western), the 11th (Northern), and the 10th (Irish)—all formed from “Kitchener’s Army,” and without experience of active service. They were variously disposed, some at Mityleni, some at Mudros, some at Helles and Anzac, but the greater number of the 11th Division in Imbros, where they spent a happy day or two swarming about the beaches and bathing in the shallows. Then in the evening of August 6th, they were embarked for their unknown fate, being shipped upon destroyers, cruisers, and “beetles,”—long, iron barges, built to transport 500 men apiece, and having a swinging platform or drawbridge projecting from the prow so that it looked like a beetle’s forceps and antennæ. I myself climbed up the steep side of the *Minneapolis*, a liner which had been taken over with all her staff as a transport for mountain batteries and their teams. As an instance of petrifying routine I may recall that, when, hoping to land at 4 a.m., I asked if I could get a cup of tea at that hour, I was haughtily informed : “On this ship breakfast is always served at 8.30.” And later in the morning, when the whole movement was at crisis, I observed the stewards sweeping out the gangways as they had swept for years. In the following spring, however, both breakfast and sweeping were disorganised when the *Minneapolis* was torpedoed between Egypt and Salonika.

That Friday-Saturday night the sea was dead calm, and

the darkness intense, for the waning moon did not rise till two o'clock. All the previous day we had heard heavy firing at Helles, where the struggle for "the Vineyard" was continuous ; and still more terrific firing from Anzac, where "Lone Pine" and "the Nek" were being attacked with incredible gallantry and sacrifice. As we moved silently northward along the coast, unseen bodies of Australians, New Zealanders, and some English troops were, like four long snakes, attempting to steal unobserved up the water-courses towards the foot of the central range, which they were to storm next morning with our support. We had something over 25,000 men of all ranks, or say 20,000 rifles, to land, some on the steep beach just south of Nibrunesi Point, some near the centre of the bay, others (coming later) among the rocky promontories towards Suvla Point, the northern extremity.

So we moved slowly forward through the darkness, and when at last we anchored, I petitioned in vain to be taken ashore. It was quite right that the mountain batteries should be landed first, for there was only one field battery with the whole force, and guns were almost essential for the advance, but there was no reason why I should have been kept shut up in the ship all day, merely watching from a distance, without much understanding. When the first brown streak of dawn appeared, I began to discern the flat expanse of the Salt Lake, about a mile and a half across, and low dark hills on the further side, one of which was marked out by a broad "blaze" of yellow marl, shaped like a Turkish scimitar, from which it was afterwards to get its name. On the plateau beyond it stood the white minaret of a village, which we came to know as Anafarta Sagir ; and high above village and hills rose the dark and formidable heights of Kavak Tepe and Tekke Tepe, which looked to me about the height of the Wrekin, but were a few feet lower. Further to the left, the northern arm of the bay rose steep and rocky, and to the right, almost in line with Anafarta stood a hill with waving crest, soon to be notorious as "W Hill"—the

point that obviously ought to have been seized at once, for it commanded the approach to Anzac, where it was our part to give support. Close at hand, forming the southern arm of the bay, one saw a small dark hill called Lala Baba, just beyond which the main body of the 11th Division had been landed.

That was all I could make out till the sun began to rise, and then I perceived bodies of men crowding together upon the sandhills near the beach, obviously under shelter and resting at ease. They were, in fact, Sitwell's 34th Brigade, which, by General Stopford's special desire, had been landed inside the bay ; though " landed " is not the right word, for the " beetles " had gone aground in the sandy shallows, as any seaside child might have foreseen, and the men had leapt out into water almost up to their necks, and so had struggled to shore in great confusion.

Before the sun actually appeared, I saw straggling bodies of men making their way through the deep sand of the spit that separates the sea from the Salt Lake, except at one small issue, which can easily be waded over. They were coming from the small rocky hill of Lala Baba at the southern end of the bay, which had been taken at the bayonet's point in the darkness, and they were, in fact, parts of the 32nd (Haggard's) Brigade, which had been ordered to join Sittwell's for the advanced march upon the Chocolate and W Hills. As light now made them visible, the few Turkish guns on the Anafarta plateau and " W Hill " opened fire upon them with shrapnel, and the numerous snipers hidden in the scrub on the north side of the Salt Lake found them an easy mark. It was a terrible ordeal for young and partially trained soldiers, who had never been under fire before, and were already much exhausted by want of sleep and food. Still they trudged on, and joined up with the other brigade. But Sittwell, who as senior officer now had the greater part of two brigades under his command, thought it impossible to move.

Except that a raging bush fire, caused by our naval guns,

burst out among the scrub to Sittwell's left, there ensued almost a dead pause till noon, when more and more men could be seen wallowing through the sand along that exposed spit. They were five battalions of Hill's Brigade coming from Mityleni and belonging to the 10th Division, but landed among the 11th on the south end of the bay instead of with their own division at the north end, where their Commanding Officer, Sir Bryan Mahon, was disembarking with three battalions from Mudros. Helpless confusion and delay naturally resulted, and before Hill's battalions had reached Sittwell's position and formed up it was three o'clock. Then at last began the advance that should have been started and completed under cover of night. Many hours might have been saved if General Hammersley, under whose command Hill had placed himself owing to the mistake of his landing among the 11th Division, had ordered these five battalions to advance straight along the south side of the Salt Lake, where lay the direct approach to Chocolate Hill, and the going, though marshy, was better than through the sand. But Hill did advance at last, through a sudden and most welcome shower of rain, and just as the sun set, four of his Irish battalions aided by two battalions of the 33rd (Maxwell's) Brigade, actually carried the entrenched position of Chocolate Hill by storm. It was something gained, but a whole day had been spent, and the dominating points of Tekke Tepe and "W Hill" yet lay far in front. No support whatever was given to the Anzac troops, who had devoted the previous night and all that day to fighting their way up the dry watercourses to the foot of the Sari Bair range, and at certain points had advanced some distance up the face of the mountain itself.

All that night I lay chafing on board, listening to the terrific firing at Anzac, but at dawn next day I was at last permitted to go ashore. It was Sunday, August 8th—a day well deserving to be called Black Sunday, for after that day the ruin of the whole campaign was irretrievable, or at least was not retrieved. Landing on the north side of the bay

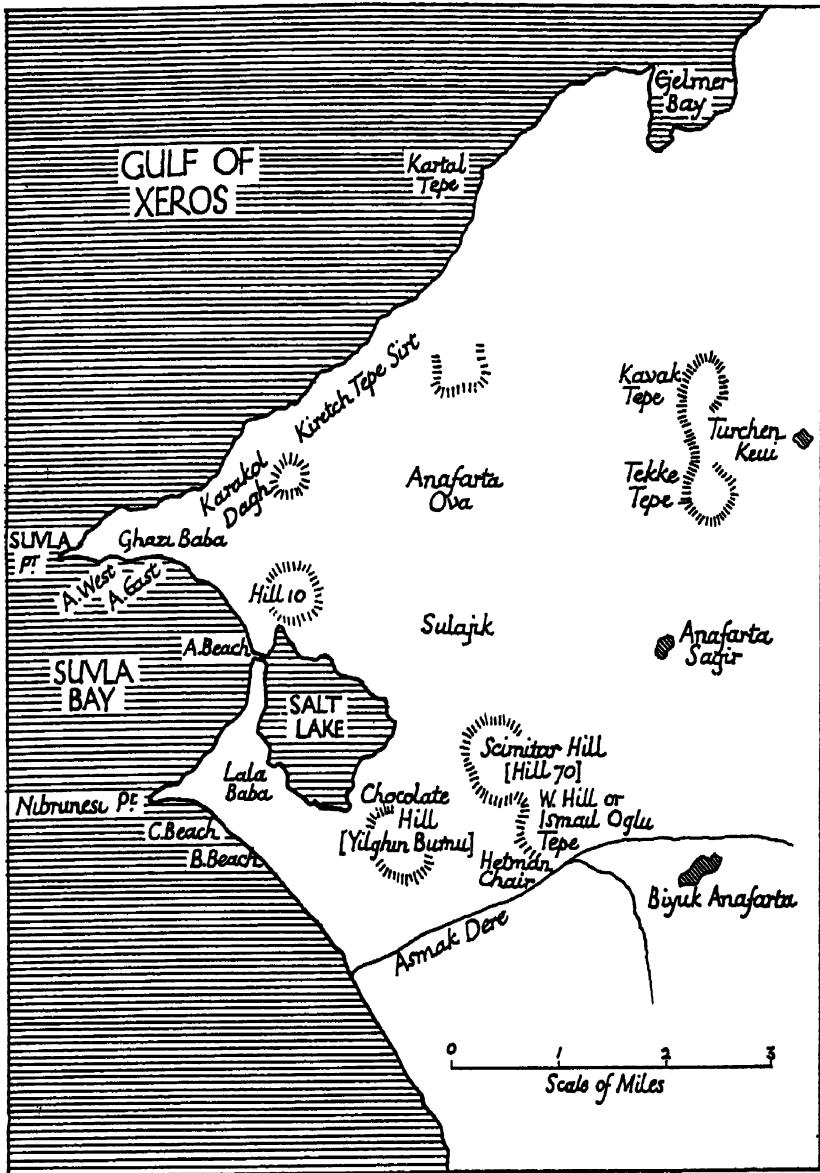
near Suvla Point (Biyuk Kemikli), which is the extremity of the steep razor-edge called Karakol Dagh, overlooking the Gulf of Xeros, I turned south and made my way along the shore of the bay and that sandy spit which shuts in the Salt Lake, till I came to the captured hill of Lala Baba. Except for the continued firing at Anzac, all was quiet, desperately quiet. The peace of a seaside resort prevailed, and it was evident that the Turks had withdrawn their guns. Men were bathing in the shallows and running naked up and down the sands. Others were crowding round the water-lighters, some even cutting holes in the hose-pipes and letting the water run to waste when they had drunk their fill ; others trying in vain to replenish the water-bottles which they had brought down from Chocolate Hill slung round their necks, a dozen together. For the anguish of thirst was intolerable, and up in the firing line some went mad under the increasing heat of the sun. The *Prah*, a ship fitted with all requisites for water supply and distribution, hung about at sea, obedient to a starchy regulation, and did not issue them till some days later. Even on the beach, where water was running out from the pipes, men in despair filled their bottles from the sea. Perhaps rightly, General Stopford, commanding the whole Corps, ordered the mules for carrying water to the front to be disembarked before the artillery horses, though of all arms the guns were most needed. Owing to the confusion of the landing, brigades and even battalions were hopelessly mixed together, and no one could be certain under whose command he stood.

Late in the afternoon, Sir Ian, full of apprehension at the silence, arrived in the bay, only to find his apprehension fully confirmed. General Stopford, apparently satisfied with what had been accomplished, informed him that nothing more could be done that day. Nothing more, when the whole success of the movement from Helles upwards depended upon the immediate occupation of those hills through which alone support to the advance from Anzac could be given ! At that very time, the Wellingtons and 7th

Gloucesters had climbed the steep shoulder of Chunuk Bair ; the 4th Australian Brigade was advancing up the height of Koja Chemen Tepe by way of Abdul Rahman Bair ; and at Lone Pine the conflict still raged desperately. But from Suvla, instead of support, came only silence. In the words of Sir Ian's own despatch : "The one fatal error was inertia. And inertia prevailed."

Nearly distracted with impatience and disappointment, Sir Ian then took a step unusual in a Commander-in-Chief. He went in person to the Headquarters of the 11th (Hammersley's) Division and directly ordered that the 32nd Brigade, which was reported to be more or less concentrated somewhere out in front (no one knew exactly where), or any other force, even if it were only a company, should advance at once upon the high ground leading up to Tekke Tepe, without waiting for the morning attack. The Divisional General sent out the order, casually naming the 6th East York Pioneers to lead the advance, believing it to be the freshest and least tried. The order sped. It is doubtful at what hour it reached the 6th East Yorks ; apparently not till near dawn of next day. In any case it came too late. A fatal error had already been consummated.

The appalling irony of the situation was this : that very day (the 8th, I suppose about noon) the 6th East York Pioneers had advanced from the neighbourhood of Chocolate Hill and were at that moment actually stationed in perfect safety upon Scimitar Hill itself—Scimitar Hill, the very key to the approach either to "W Hill" on the right front or to Tekke Tepe on the left ! There they actually were, in position and unopposed ! Whether they now withdrew on receiving Sir Ian's order to conform with the rest of the Brigade for an attack upon Tekke Tepe (which has hitherto been the general belief), or whether they withdrew because they were unsupported on both flanks (which is the view more recently suggested by Mr. John Still, who was acting as Adjutant to the 6th East Yorks at the time), no one can now be sure ; for their Commanding Officer, Colonel Moore,



THE SUYLA LANDING



was killed next day. At all events he withdrew his tired and sleepless battalion, Pioneers and all, to the Sulajik line at the foot of the hills, and Scimitar Hill was abandoned without a blow. How many hundreds of men we lost in our attempts to recover it, I cannot say. But it was never recovered, and the failure of the Suvla enterprise became inevitable.<sup>1</sup>

For myself, I saw Sir Ian's arrival on the *Arno*, which had started from Imbros an hour late, her fires having been "drawn" (I can only suppose by the "Jins" attendant upon Mohammed's ghost, for there can have been no reason for such folly), and I saw him proceed along the beach to Hammersley's Headquarters on Lala Baba accompanied by Commodore Roger Keyes. But, of course, I had no idea how ominous the next movement was to become. Returning to Suvla Point, I climbed the razor-edge of the Karakol Dagh, now held by some battalions of Mahon's 10th Division, and then built myself a shelter of dry brushwood on the extreme point, where I dossed down and slept, some naval details kindly supplying me with rations.

The crash and rattle of firing from the foot of Sari Bair continued all night, for the main assault upon the heights from Anzac was in progress. At dawn (Monday 9th) I walked across the Salt Lake to Chocolate Hill, and remained there all day, hoping for some advance, but in vain. Perceiving the silence and inertia of the previous day, the Turks under the immediate command of Mustapha Kemal, now

<sup>1</sup> Light was thrown upon this terrible mishap by a letter published by Sir Ian in the *Times* of October 30, 1923. It was from Mr. John Still, who wrote from Kandy, Ceylon, saying that on that fatal night of August 8-9 he was acting-adjutant of the 6th East Yorks upon Scimitar Hill, but the battalion was left "in air," having no sufficient support on either side. They received no orders, he said, but an officer with a signaller climbed Tekke Tepe and found it empty. Next morning about thirty went up, but only five came down, himself being one. He said that Sir Ian's orders for a brigade to attack Tekke Tepe did not reach his battalion till dawn on the 9th (Monday) when they were already back in the trenches of the Sulajik line. It was then that the thirty climbed Tekke Tepe, but they found it now strongly held, the Turks swarming over the mountain. He was himself wounded and kept prisoner till the end of the war.

dictator of Turkey, had rushed up powerful reinforcements—at least three divisions—and replaced their guns on Anafarta Plateau, also increasing the number of guns. Our mixed brigades and battalions were struggling to make their way by sheep tracks through the thick and prickly bushes, crowded with snipers, at the foot of the plateau, and continuous attacks were made against that Scimitar Hill which had been so quietly and disastrously abandoned the night before. Presently fire broke out upon the hill itself, sweeping over the front and summit, consuming the dry bushes in sheets of flame. I could see the wounded, both British and Turk, creeping out on hands and knees to seek safety upon that yellow “blaze” which gave the name of “Scimitar” to the hill. But many perished from smoke and heat, and many were burnt alive, being unable to move. Here and there a party reached the summit, but they either fell or came rushing back. It was no wonder. The situation was indeed intolerable, and neither officers nor men of the New Army had ever known fighting before.

The survivors formed into an irregular and confused line along the trench among the small trees and bushes in front of the hills, and Generals Maxwell and Hill, with whom I was then standing, gave orders to reorganise and renew the attack. But no determined attack was further possible. The men were worn out, apprehensive, and despondent; suffering too from the torture of thirst, for one of the springs that had been discovered in the open behind our line was exposed to snipers. At the other the maddened men crowded so thick that no one could be sure of getting water at all, and I tried in vain to arrange them in queue to take their turn. The usual scenes of a battlefield added to the distress and alarm. The dead were lying about in great numbers; the wounded were crying aloud for help; the hands and faces of hastily buried men protruded from the ground, and as I walked I felt at intervals the squelching softness of a man’s body, scarcely covered beneath the soil. Late in the afternoon the Generals asked me to report to Hammersley at

Lala Baba, but I could report no good. I then returned to my brushwood shelter. It was the day on which the Gurkhas and South Lancashires reached the crest of Sari Bair, beheld the Straits open before them, and were driven off by heavy shells, probably our own. After that day the hope of victory was abandoned by almost all but the Commander-in-Chief.

Always an optimist, Sir Ian first resolved to throw into Suvla the 53rd (Welsh) and the 54th (East Anglian) Divisions, which formed his only reserve. They were Territorials, little over half strength, having no guns, and arriving only on Tuesday the 10th, and Wednesday the 11th. His intention was to send one Division in front and the other in support to attack the heights of Tekke Tepe, which he had always recognised as the key position. General Stopford, however, demurred. Still hoping to recover Scimitar Hill, he sent the 53rd Division across the Salt Lake to renew the attack, but the result was pitiful. Watching from Chocolate Hill, where again I spent all day, I could see the men running backwards and forwards among the black relics of the burnt bushes, quite unable to make any headway, but suffering heavy loss. Along the corner of one small field of stubble I saw a lot of men lying at ease, as I supposed, but they never moved. They were all dead.

Next day (Wednesday, 11th) I found the situation even more hopeless, the brigades more mixed up, the men more "rattled" and overcome by vague apprehensions. Sir Ian returned to Suvla, and again urged his scheme of attack, but General Stopford still raised objections, and foresaw difficulties, saying that neither of the two new divisions was fit for the advance. One brigade of four battalions, however, did advance and reached a farm at the foot of the hills. There they stopped, finding the trees and bush impenetrable. One battalion—the 5th Norfolks, under Colonel Sir Horace Beauchamp—alone persisted. The Colonel was last seen carrying a cane and encouraging his men to go forward. With 16 officers and 250 men he then disappeared into the

forest, and not a single member of that battalion was ever seen again.

That night I was recalled to Imbros, and sailed in a trawler full of Staff officers, who discussed polo and eatables all the way, perhaps to take their minds off the situation. I never knew why I was recalled, unless it was to witness how gloomy, jealous, and ill-tempered a Headquarter Staff can become when times are bad. In three days, however, I was back again at Suvla, and there witnessed a fine attempt of two battalions of the 10th Division to storm the long, sharp ridge leading along Karakol Dagh to Ejelmer Bay. The movement of the battalions astride the narrow ridge, one side of which fell steeply into the Gulf of Xeros, was very slow, and I reflected how slowly I should probably move towards probable death. Many other events I saw that afternoon which had better not be described, but a fine bayonet charge right along the summit of the edge was, I think, the only real bayonet charge I have ever been near. It drove the Turks clean out of their strong position, and I returned to the Point much encouraged. But next morning I heard the Turks had come back at night and reoccupied the place, after causing great loss. The attempt was never made again, and that night General Stopford was superseded by General De Lisle, transferred from his command of the 29th Division at Helles.

The great scheme of converging attacks from Helles, Anzac, and Suvla had failed, and for various reasons—accident or mischance, misjudgment of locality, and the complicated nature of the ground, making a night attack extremely problematic. But behind all obvious reasons of failure lay the ultimate cause that the troops employed, especially at Suvla, were not strong, not experienced enough for the task imposed upon them. Few in the New Army or the Territorial Divisions were acquainted with the realities of war, or had been exposed to its sudden and overwhelming perils. They had not the tradition, the veteran experience, the disciplined self-confidence of the Regular Army. And

they had not the physique, the adventurous spirit, the national bond of the Anzacs. What they might perhaps have done under decisive, youthful, and inspiring leadership can be judged from their subsequent service in later campaigns—such service as was performed in Palestine by these Territorial Divisions themselves. But in August, 1915, their leadership was not decisive, youthful, or inspiring.

Something had been gained, though at a loss of 30,000 men upon all three fronts combined. The Vineyard at Helles and Lone Pine at Anzac were held. The whole position at Anzac was far less constricted, and one could walk from Anzac to Suvla without much risk except from occasional snipers. At Suvla we held the wide plain round the Salt Lake, with at least two springs of good water, and it seemed likely that the bay would afford better harbourage for the ships in winter than the exposed inlet at Kephalos. It was something, but the commanding positions of Tekke Tepe, Scimitar Hill and "W Hill" were still in the enemy's hands, and Sir Ian resolved upon one more attempt to recover what was actually ours on the 8th, and might have remained ours but for errors and inertia. His plan was to bring round the relics of the famous 29th Division from Helles, and with them to attack Scimitar Hill in the centre, having the 11th Division on the right and the two Territorial Divisions on the left.

It was the afternoon of August 21st, and the struggle began with the usual intense, but ineffectual bombardment from the ships in the bay. Then the indomitable division started its advance up the front of that fatal Scimitar Hill, already burnt black. From the front trench on Chocolate Hill I could watch their movement, at first through burnt bushes, and then up that bare and yellow "blaze." The 1st Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers were leading, and they actually gained the summit, driving the Turks back towards Anafarta Sagir, and down the reverse slope. But there they were met by new lines of trenches, and I could see the Turks leaping on the parapets and pouring bullets upon the scattered line as it advanced. At the same time numerous

guns on the foot of Tekke Tepe and "W Hill" opened a heavy fire upon the summit, and this converging storm of shell and bullets became intolerable. Owing chiefly to loss of direction, the division on the right failed to support, and the Yeomanry Division (unmounted, of course), which had come up as reserve, became confused with the brigades on the right and centre, being further puzzled and distressed by renewed flames among the dry bushes. Still in the gathering obscurity at 7.30 I could see a crowd of khaki figures struggling up that all-too-familiar "blaze," and when darkness fell over them we all hoped the summit might have been won. But nothing could now live upon that terrible place which the 6th East Yorks had occupied without a blow a fortnight before. After a loss of 6500 casualties, the divisions had to be withdrawn and reformed in their old trenches along the foot of the hills. So ended the last determined attempt to secure victory in the Dardanelles.

At the very beginning of the infantry's advance (3.15) the Turkish bombardment of our position on Chocolate Hill had become very heavy. Shells tore at our parapets. The air above our trenches hissed with bullets, and many of our men were struck down. Suddenly I too was felled like an ox by a blow from a shell on the top of my head, as though a trip-hammer had struck me. A machine-gun officer at my side said, "Are you hit?" and seeing my brown shirt already sopped with blood, and the stones around us sprinkled too with blood, I answered, "I suppose I am." With his help I tied a pocket-dressing tight round my head. The men began shouting for stretchers, but, being quite conscious, I stood up and walked back along the trenches, with the support of one man, everyone making room for us owing to my ghastly appearance. In the rear of the hill, a dresser tied on a second bandage. But the blood still flowed in great quantities, as I am told it always does from a scalp wound, and I was alarmed at the lumps of pink jelly that came out with the blood; for I feared they might be bits of brain. Having, however, recited to myself several familiar passages

of verse (including "the multitudinous seas incarnadine"), I decided there was nothing much the matter, and as the flow of blood began to slacken in about an hour, I got up and went to my former position, though I was certainly "an appalling object." I was thus able to watch that terrific onslaught till the end, and I walked back to Suvla Point, about four miles, without any inconvenience but pain. The surgeon at the dressing-station, thinking the skull was fractured, wished to operate and trepan, but when I told him my head was impenetrable to all but reason, he desisted, and though the bandage had to be renewed every day for a week, I went about my business as usual. It may be medically interesting to notice that for the forty-eight hours before going out to that engagement, I had been suffering from high fever, bursting into song, as is my nightingale or swanlike custom when temperature goes above 100 degrees ; but the rush of blood reduced the temperature at once, and silenced the musical strains.

After the failure of that assault upon Scimitar Hill (August 21) the army settled down into enforced inactivity, and the effect of inactivity upon an army, as upon civilians, is depression. Even the arrival of Major-General Fanshawe (to command the 11th Division), Major-General Stanley Maude, afterwards the hero of Bagdad (to command the 10th Division), and Major-General Sir Julian Byng (to command the IXth Corps) could not enliven the lethargy of disappointment. Monotony of food, scarcity of water, myriads of flies, and the consequent dysentery or perpetual diarrhoea increased the depression, and all looked forward with gloom to a winter campaign upon that exposed and desert promontory. About one-third of the whole force had been lost during August, and the sight of the graves, and of the mouldering bodies that could not be reached for burial, added sorrow which even the spectacle of hundreds of Turkish corpses flung down a ravine in the face of Chunuk Bair did not cheer. No further action was possible without reinforcements. General H. B. Walker put the number

required at 300,000 ; but the authorities upon the Western Front thought little of the Dardanelles, and refused to spare a man from their vast preparations for the prolonged failures of Loos and Champagne. During August the Russian armies were driven hopelessly back in Poland, and it was evident that Ferdinand of Bulgaria, like a fox between two packs of hounds, long hesitating which way to run, was now inclining to seek refuge among the Central Powers.

Various rumours flew through the peninsula : would not the Navy make another attempt to pierce the Narrows ? Might there not be a landing at Alexandretta ? Or perhaps, after all, at Adramyti Bay opposite Mityleni ? On the nominal excuse of seeing the bay for myself, I resolved to visit Mityleni as chance offered. My real reason, of course, was to see the ancient home of Sappho, which I had merely sailed past in returning from devastated Georgia in 1907. But I was also weary of wandering about the trenches at Helles, climbing the dangerous heights of Lone Pine and "the Apex" at Anzac, where for some time I occupied the dug-out of a sergeant, who had left in it touching messages and "souvenirs," but had never returned, and of following the long and difficult passage from Anzac to Suvla. On all sides I found depression and loss of heart, bitter criticism of G.H.Q., and savage rage against Mr. Winston Churchill, who "ought to be publicly hanged" for having suggested the campaign. Birdwood himself, Alexander Godley, Monash (4th Australian Infantry Brigade), and A. H. Russell (N.Z. Mounted Rifle Brigade) maintained at least the appearance of spirit and persistence, but general despondency prevailed.

Obtaining leave of brief absence from Sir Ian, I set off in a queer little motor-boat with Ashmead-Bartlett, William Maxwell, Malcolm Ross, and Bean, for Lesbos (Mityleni), and stayed a week or so in that beautiful island, haunted by such beauty of words and thought as no other woman poet has reached, though the fragments of Sappho's verse run hardly to two pages. I climbed the neighbouring mountains,

wandered far through the forests of olive trees, came to know Consul-General Hesketh-Smith, who entrusted me with an entirely new plan of campaign upon the Asiatic coast ; and I then met his subordinate, Mr. Hole, whom I was again to meet twelve years later as Consul-General in the difficult post of Damascus. For one long day I crossed in another little motor-boat to the " Hundred Isles " through which we approached close up to the Turkish town of Aivali, carrying with us Greek Andarti spies and various documents deeply compromising to the existence of us all. But at the back of my mind there always stood Sappho, and that great debate in Athens whether the whole male population of Mitylene should be put to death for rebellion or only the leaders, and how the galley raced to overtake the order for general massacre, the rowers being sustained by handfuls of barley-meal steeped in wine and oil, a queer kind of stimulant.<sup>1</sup>

As nothing of modern importance seemed likely to happen, I left Mityleni, and by the kindness of Captain Grant, of the *Canopus*, then lying in the Iero landlocked harbour, I was taken through a raging sea on board an old mine-layer, the *Latona*, and so reached Mudros harbour, where I found General Altham, my old censor in the Ladysmith siege, now stationed as Inspector-General of Communications on the *Aragon*. She was a sort of officers' clearing-house, and had won a high reputation as a kind of Enchanted Isle for officers coming from the peninsula, owing to the opportunities there of baths, clean linen, and iced drinks. The expenses on board were put down at £300 a day, but I question the assertion that at the end of the campaign the *Aragon* was aground upon empty bottles as upon a coral reef. For that harbour took battleships with ease, to say nothing of the *Aquitania* and the largest liners afloat.

Calling upon Sir Ian in his Headquarters at Imbros, I soon perceived that some great change was at hand. Owing to the rumours about Bulgaria's defection, it was easy to

<sup>1</sup> Thucydides, III, 49.

conjecture that he had in mind the proposed attempt to succour Serbia by occupation of Salonika, and in fact the very next day he embarked the 10th Division. He also offered the 53rd. The French were sending a division (156) under that merry veteran, General Bailloud. When I spoke about preparations for the winter upon the peninsula, Sir Ian laughed and said, "Oh, we shan't be here in the winter." But he gave me a letter saying he would heartily welcome me back if I now went home on leave for five or six weeks, and so I parted from him (Oct. 1st). He had little more than a fortnight to remain. In answer to Lord Kitchener's telegram, he replied that such a step as evacuation was to him unthinkable. In any case it was impossible to estimate the losses involved, but they might come to 50 per cent. Thereupon Kitchener telegraphed that the War Council wished to make a change in the command, and had appointed Sir Charles Monro to supply a fresh unbiased opinion. On October 17th, to the grief of the whole army and navy, Sir Ian sailed on the cruiser *Chatham*, and left the peninsula which had been the dramatic stage of such high hopes, such noble achievement, such bitter and tragic frustration.

In spite of the general despondency, and the likelihood that more important action might soon be taking place in the Balkans which I knew so well, I now think I was wrong in leaving the Dardanelles at that time. For I missed the new command ; I missed Kitchener's visit ; I missed the terrific blizzard of storm and snow at the end of November ; and I returned only just in time for the evacuation. However, I went back to the *Aragon* at Mudros again, in company with Ashmead-Bartlett, who was sent home by Sir Ian's Staff for attempting to get a strongly hostile criticism of the campaign through to Mr. Asquith without submitting it to the official censor. As usual, he had made no secret of that secret missive, but had read it aloud to various officers and correspondents, one of whom gave information about it to the Chief of Staff, so that the Australian who was carrying the manuscript was arrested on arriving at Marseilles, and

the document was found on him. It might be argued that a correspondent is justified in breaking his pledged word for what he considers the highest interests of the country, but there is no question that the man who is discovered doing it has to go.<sup>1</sup>

From Mudros I was taken on board the cruiser *Bacchante* (Captain Boyle) and, for fear of the submarines lurking in the rocky inlets of Crete, we took a zigzag course through the Greek islands, showing me Taygetos again on the right and the Cretan mountains on the port side, until, rounding the southern coast of Sicily, we made Malta on the fourth day. The little voyage was notable to me for the presence on board of the ship's Medical Officer, Dr. Murray Levick, who had been to the Antarctic with the Scott expedition, and gave me his fine monograph upon the Adélie penguins, proving how much better it would have been for mankind if we had developed from those gracious and kindly birds, as Anatole France imagined, rather than from lecherous and acquisitive apes.

On my birthday, October 11th, I was in London again, and soon after had a long conversation with Sir Ian, who told me of his interview with Kitchener, and rightly insisted that he would rather have been recalled than obliged to sacrifice the British reputation and a vast proportion of his army—he put it between three-quarters and one half—by withdrawing from the peninsula. In a public meeting at the Portman Rooms I also had the opportunity of explaining why, in my opinion, it was already too late to save Serbia, as Bulgaria had now entered the war against us and had in fact that day occupied Uskub. None the less, at a large gathering in Manchester of the big provincial editors, it was decided, rather against my wish and judgment, to send me now to Salonika instead of back to Gallipoli, and by the end of the month I was in Paris with Robert Dell, friend of Anatole France, and at that time the famous Paris corre-

<sup>1</sup> For Ashmead-Bartlett's own defence of his action see his book "The Uncensored Dardanelles" (1928)

spondent of the *Manchester Guardian*—a man of great knowledge, and possessing an extraordinary flair for information, upon which he based forecasts seldom fulfilled.

In Athens I had a long conversation with Venizelos, who was then at desperate enmity with King Constantine, and had been compelled to resign early in October, though supported in his pro-Allies and pro-Serbian policy by a great majority of the Greek Chamber. The King, who could not believe that the German army, in which he had been trained, or the Kaiser, whose sister he had married, could ever be defeated, had dissolved the Chamber against all constitutional right. But Venizelos was guided by two main principles—one, that honour demanded the observance of the 1913 treaty to assist Serbia in her distress, and the other that England in every war always wins one battle—the last. Immediately after our conversation, in which, like all educated people, he had great difficulty in understanding my public-school French, I wrote the following notes in my diary (November 9th, 1915) :

" He received me very graciously. An upstanding, active man, but with no look of the soldier or of the outdoor rebel as he had been when I was in Crete in 1897 ; pale, nearly bald, with short grey beard, spectacles over rather light, quick-moving eyes, with more than a hint of wildness in them. He began at once by attacking the King, who had broken down the constitutional liberties of the nation, and overthrown the great reform of six years before, which had completely changed Greece and given her a new start in life. Twice the people had declared for himself (I think in February and September) but now all democracy was submitted to despotic will, and a lot of old men belonging to the ancient régime had been brought back. The sympathy of the people was with England and France, but for fifteen months German influence had been working upon the upper classes, representing the Kaiser as invincible and inspiring terror into the Greek mind. He lamented the mistake of the first (naval) attempt upon the Dardanelles, and thought that withdrawal was now inevitable sooner or later. He feared that another disaster at Salonika, for want of seriousness in

the enterprise and the forces, would overthrow the prestige of the Allies throughout the East, but he still hoped that the attempt, though so late, might yet succeed, in which case both Greece and Rumania would come in and the whole war find its end in the Balkans. He did not see any good in the proposed new elections since the people's will was persistently disregarded, and only old men could vote, the soldiers on service being out of the question. He thought the King was certainly a good soldier (what a change since that war of 1897 when I saw him as Crown Prince in Larissa, whence he ran so hastily !), but the Queen exerted continual influence upon him, naturally on the German side."

Throughout this conversation, Venizelos displayed great nervousness, trembling with passion, raising his voice almost to a scream or a whine, and at times almost bursting into tears. That was the Greek manner, to which I had long been accustomed, for Greeks had never been drilled as we are to restrain the expression of emotion till the emotion itself almost dies of atrophy. But in those days Venizelos had certainly good cause for agitation, seeing as he did the whole fabric of his labours for his country falling to pieces at the touch of a dubious and inconstant ruler. Very different was the estimate of that puzzled monarch given me on the same day by the Prime Minister, Skouloudis, who had taken the place of Venizelos :

" Skouloudis," I wrote, " is a large and powerful man of seventy-eight ; big brown eyes, reddish, robust face, copious grey beard ; speaks excellent English, and enquired very kindly after old Sir Edwin Pears who had given me a letter to him ; rather a fine old figure, apparently honest. He said that after the Conference of London (1913) he had retired for age and ill-health, but at the King's request he had now returned to public life. He spoke of the King as a frank, plain-spoken soldier, a true Greek but retaining Danish tenacity ; he listens to advice, makes up his mind, and is then immovable. No one, not even the Queen, can change his policy ; he is quite friendly to the Entente, and would have joined them last spring, but could not as a soldier approve of the Dardanelles campaign. Skouloudis thinks

the Serbian expedition comes too late, as is indeed obvious. German munitions are already reaching Constantinople by way of the Danube, as he had heard by telegram to-day. But he was very indignant at the journalists' suggestion that Greece would turn against us and cut us off in Salonika. The Greeks were far too grateful to England, France, and Russia for past services, and he asked me to contradict the idea with all my power. Upon this point he spoke with violence. He said he had not decided about a general election ; under mobilisation some 800,000 might vote and that was enough to express opinion. But indeed there were no parties now in Greece, only sympathisers, some German, but the majority pro-Allies. And there was much feeling for Serbia, too, but her military position was utterly hopeless."

Those confusing contradictions were a good introduction to the blind chaos that I found prevailing in Salonika when I arrived on November 14th. But before describing that disastrous situation, it would be simpler to conclude the account of my experiences in the Dardanelles. For after I had been absorbed for three weeks in Salonian ineptitude, a longing to return to the open air and definite warfare of the familiar peninsula seized me. Or perhaps it was an instinctive premonition that something vital was about to happen there. On December 7th I was back in Imbros again, and received such a welcome from my former servant, a private in the Munster Fusiliers, as one can seldom hope to get upon this undemonstrative earth ; most seldom from a British "Tommy." For he came leaping and bounding along the shore to meet me, as though I were essential to his very life.

In the new Headquarters, close to our old camp upon Imbros, I found General Birdwood now in command of "The Dardanelles Army," as General Sir Charles Monro had named it as distinguished from "The Salonika Army," when he took over the command of all Mediterranean forces east of Malta, except Egypt. Kitchener had come out strongly opposed to evacuation, for he rightly regarded the Dardanelles Army as a perpetual thorn in the side of Turkey

even if it advanced no further ; but he had been won over by Monro's report and the persuasion of Staff officers upon the *Aragon*, one of whom proudly boasted to me that " We soon brought Kitchener round to our way of thinking." Indeed, on the very first morning (December 8th) that I awoke, enraptured by the mountain air surrounding the lonely cottage into which I had forced an entrance, the fatal decree went out, and Birdwood was ordered to prepare for the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla. Of course ignorant of this decision, I crossed in starry darkness to the peninsula in a trawler commanded by an old walrus of a skipper whom I had known in the Gamecock Fleet upon the North Sea. It was the same who privately informed me : " If the Kayser 'ad knowed as we'd trawlers he wouldn't never 'ave declared war ! " For some days I wandered over all the familiar scenes, being well received by General Godley in Anzac, General Stanley Maude, General Byng at Suvla, General F. J. Davies (C.O. of the VIIIth Corps) at Helles, and many more, including, of course, my old friends Bean and Malcolm Ross at Anzac. All the old lines were much the same, except that they had been extended a little and more strongly entrenched at Suvla ; but as I passed from one scene to another, sleeping in any dug-out that came handy, I noticed that all the spirit had gone out of the campaign with Sir Ian's departure, and I was almost driven to conclude that the evacuation might be justified simply by loss of heart.

To bring away an army from open beaches fully exposed to the enemy has always been recognised as one of the most difficult of military operations. On this occasion the probable loss of men was estimated by some at 50 per cent, and by none at less than 15 per cent. Yet by unexampled skill Birdwood, night by night and bit by bit, brought away the men, guns, horses, mules, and most of the supply without the loss of a single man. No man, horse, mule, or gun of the two Army Corps was left behind, and the task was accomplished in eleven days. Encamped in a deserted cattle-shelter close

to Suvla Point, I watched the anxious labour, assisting as I could, and in daylight showing myself to the Turks as visibly as possible, in accordance with Birdwood's order "to maintain the immemorial British custom of showing ourselves on the sky-line and serving our country by walking where we could be best observed." With this intention I walked one day right along the razor-edge of the Karakol Dagh till I came to "Jephson's Post," the point where our line abruptly ended, and found myself in the elaborate trenches and forts of a Yorks brigade (the 32nd), commanded by General Dallas. The General took me round the trenches with sorrowing pride. He felt for those trenches the personal affection of a mother for her child, of a girl for her dolls'-house, of a painter for his art. "Pity to leave them! Pity to leave them!" he kept whispering to me, and going from man to man he saw that each was neatly shaved and washed. "Keeps their tails up! Keeps their tails up!" he said, and if ever a man practised the whole art of war by the exercise of the domestic virtues it was he.

Night after night I watched the slow but steady embarkation, and with each night the anxiety increased as our front line grew thinner. On the last morning only 12,000 men were left, whereas regulations required 33,000 to hold the length of ground at Suvla. It was Sunday, December 19th, and at sunset our guns fired their last salute to the Turks, and were withdrawn—the last gun at 9.30. In silence, under the malignant light of a misted moon, the men began to steal down the narrow and often precipitous paths. They left all manner of devices with lighted tapers and strings to fire off rifles after they had gone, maintaining a desultory fusillade for about an hour. Two hundred of the West Yorks were ordered to hold the fourth line to the last, and sacrifice themselves if the Turks attacked. An aeroplane alarmed us by hovering overhead, but dropped a green light to show it was one of ours. Here and there a few camp fires continued to burn, and two lights glimmered from the deserted hospital tents. I waited till those 200 came down and were embarked

at a separate pier on the Gulf of Xeros side. Then I was taken off by Captain Unwin, hero of the *River Clyde* landing, in his pinnace to the *Cornwallis*, first seeing General Byng leave Suvla Point as the last man there. It was 4.30 a.m. of December 20th. Six thousand men had come away from our end of Suvla Bay, and General Maude got about the same number off from the other point, called Nibrunesi. At dawn the *Cornwallis* began shelling the Turks whom we could see creeping down to our old positions, and Turkish guns shelled our ship in return, but in vain. At 9 a.m. we steamed away for Imbros, and I left the familiar peninsula.

The final parties of the 40,000 men at Anzac were brought away with equal skill the same night, and four days later Birdwood received orders to prepare a scheme for evacuating Helles also. In spite of Mr. Winston Churchill's protest on resigning office, the Government had resolved to "cut their losses" as a disappointed gambler does. He had always implored them to carry through these operations with the utmost vigour and fury.<sup>1</sup> But far from displaying vigour, let alone fury, the Government seemed to regard the expedition rather as an overburdened father regards an illegitimate child put out to nurse in a distant village. It was a "by-blow," something apart from the well-regulated order of things. If the person who superintended its welfare clamoured for more assistance, she must be taught her proper place, or palmed off with gifts that were no gifts. Every breath of suspicion or detraction must be listened to, every chance of abandonment welcomed, and the news of a peaceful ending accepted with a sigh of relief.

I longed to remain for the funeral, but George Ward Price, the indefatigable correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, who had come with me from Salonika, received at Imbros a telegram

<sup>1</sup> Speaking in the House of Commons, November 15th, 1915, he said : "If there were any operations in the history of the world which, having been begun, it was worth while to carry through with the utmost vigour and fury, with a consistent flow of reinforcements, and an utter disregard of life, it was the operations so daringly and brilliantly begun by Sir Ian Hamilton in the immortal landing of April 25."

ordering him to return at once owing to serious events there, and, of course, London had as yet heard nothing of the evacuation. Reluctantly I left my mountain hut for a city's smoke and wealth and chatter. In the brilliant dawn of Christmas Day I looked again across the peninsula to the grey and distant height of Mount Ida, where the fountains still are running, and to the escarpment on the plain where Troy once stood. There in white and purple ran the Dardanelles, and there lay the battered hulk of the *River Clyde*. There was Lancashire Landing, and there Anzac Cove, and the heights of Sari Bair. Further away projected the rocky points of Suvla, and now the time was approaching when all that well-known peninsula, so near a neighbour to Troy, would be haunted by kindred memories. There the many men whom I had seen and known had once their habitation. There they had felt the finest human joy—the joy of active companionship in a cause which they accounted noble. There they had faced the utmost suffering of hardship and pain, the utmost terrors of death. The crowded caverns in which they made their dwelling-place would soon be falling in, except where some shepherd might use a headquarters as more weatherproof than his hut, or as a sheltered pen for his sheep. The trenches that they dug and held to the death would soon crumble into furrows, covered with grass and flowers, or with crops more fertile for so deep a ploughing. The graves would be slowly obliterated, and the scattered bones that cost so much in the breeding would return to earth.

Such were my thoughts as I tramped down to the little pier on Kephalos Bay for the last time, and was swiftly carried to Mudros harbour in the destroyer *Scorpion*. But now I know that in our history the peninsula, the straits, the surrounding seas, and the beautiful islands set among them will remain as memorials to record, it is true, the disastrous and tragic disabilities of our race, but at the same time its versatility, its fortitude, and its happy though silent welcome to any voluntary sacrifice involving great issues for mankind.

## CHAPTER III

### SALONIKA

*“Who, if he rise to station of command,  
Rises by open means ; and there will stand  
On honourable terms, or else retire,  
And in himself possess his own desire ;  
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same  
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;  
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait  
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;  
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,  
Like showers of manna, if they come at all ;  
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,  
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,  
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;  
But who, if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined  
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,  
Is happy as a lover ; and attired  
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired.”*

WORDSWORTH; “Character of the Happy Warrior.”

FROM that Christmastide, 1915, when I had to leave the Dardanelles, I must go back a few weeks to November 14th, when I first landed at Salonika. First, that is to say, on this campaign, for I had been there twelve years before with the Brailsfords when we were trying to rescue wretched Macedonians from Turkish abomination.<sup>1</sup> In 1915 the fire that consumed half Salonika still lay some months ahead, and from the deep water along the marble quay the beautiful city rose complete up the steep hill-side to the limit of her ancient walls, beyond which extended the wild and empty country, traversed by mountain tracks to distant villages. The three ancient churches—St. Sophia, St. George, and the splendid St. Dimitrius (since destroyed

<sup>1</sup> See “More Changes More Chances,” chapter I.

by fire)—which I before knew as mosques, had lately been restored to the Orthodox Church, and the whole city was Greek again. But apart from the European houses along the waterside, the character of the place was Turkish still. Yet it recalled the transmutations of slowly moving history. Here passed the innumerable hosts of Persia, in splendid advance and ruinous retreat. Here Alexander hastened from his neighbouring birthplace to the conquest of the world. Here Cicero lamented for his distant city. And St. Paul came here, without attracting much notice, I suppose ; not nearly so much as the forgotten series of Emperors who looked so fine as they here progressed along the Egnatian Way to Constantinople.

Exactly opposite the city across the purple bay rises Mount Olympus, glittering with snow or wrapt in films of mist. South-west stands Pelion, and the gap between the two sacred mountains is the sacred Vale of Tempe. North-west, beyond the malarial marshes of the Vardar, one looks to distant snowy mountains on the way to Lake Ostrovo, Florina, and Monastir. Upon the almost landlocked harbour itself there lay a chaos of ships—middle-aged battleships, cruisers, one of our big “monitors,” French vessels piled high with lumbering armament, a Russian craft with five thin funnels in a row (inevitably called “The Woodbine” by our men from the five cigarettes in a Woodbine packet), destroyers, torpedo boats, transports with men or supplies, fairy-like hospital ships, and the usual swarm of Greek sailing boats lashed to the quay.

But the chaos of races within the city itself was still more amazing—Jews in long fur-trimmed robes, with Jewesses in green and scarlet head-dresses and slips of muslin drawn over their breasts (descendants of the Jews who sought refuge among Turks from the Christians of Spain) ; native Greeks, and many Turks lurking still in their ancient homes ; swarms of slovenly Greek soldiers, in khaki uniforms provided, it was said, by the British tax-payer ; their officers still rattling the obsolete sword ; Austrians and Germans

walking about unperturbed (for was not Greece a neutral country ?) ; British sailors, and crowds of French and British officers and men. As I said in the last chapter, one French division under General Bailloud, and our 10th Division under General Sir Bryan Mahon had been sent from the Dardanelles. Other British and French divisions were daily expected, and the supreme command rested with General Sarrail, who owed his appointment rather to his advanced politics than his military reputation.

Was ever such a situation ? Venizelos as Prime Minister had invited us to save Serbia, but now King Constantine had dismissed him, reversed his policy, and declared the Greek kingdom strictly neutral, though “friendly to the Allies” ; friendly because he feared a British blockade, since any fleet could starve his country. So there the army stood, on neutral ground, surrounded by a far more numerous Greek army, dissembling hostility and ready to spring upon us at any moment ; while our declared enemies from Austria and Germany pursued espionage unchecked, and German and Bulgarian forces were gradually creeping down upon our northern front, some towards Monastir, others as though to assault Salonika herself by way of Lake Doiran and Gevgeli. Heavy snow was beginning to fall.

It was a position to puzzle a general of genius, and Sarrail was not that. His first intention had been to get in touch with the portion of the Serbian Army still at Veles (Kuprili) far up the Vardar, but the day before I arrived that poor relic had been forced to begin its miserable retreat through Albania to the Adriatic, and all hope of rescuing “gallant little Serbia” was at an end. What was there left to do ? Sarrail sat in his suburban villa south of the city, and every day I went to admire his stalwart person, his large bronzed face with blue eyes, grey moustache and grizzled hair all on end, his rapid but indistinct language, and his familiar jests, verging upon buffoonery. But he told us nothing. “La neige ! La neige ! ” That was all. Perhaps there was nothing more to say. And the British G.H.Q., under Sir

Bryan Mahon, informed me desperately they really did not know why we were there or what we were going to attempt. I found the brigades of the newly-arriving 22nd Division spread out along the road to Monastir, but entirely ignorant of any purpose, and the old 10th Division was lost to sight beyond Lake Doiran. To add to my personal perplexities I had to submit my telegrams, first to a pernickety Intelligence Officer in the British G.H.Q., and then to the Greek censor, who hid himself here or there and demanded a French translation.

From the wretchedness of city life, with nothing to do but wander in vain to ignorant Headquarters or to sit in cafés listening in vain to all the crazy rumours of war, I was allowed to enjoy only two brief respites. With a few others I was invited up to Strumitza station on the Vardar, where I found General Bailloud holding the French advanced line with the division he had brought from Helles, and I was glad to meet that humorous old skeleton again. He was indeed a welcome figure anywhere—very small, very thin, close upon seventy, with brilliant eyes like a hawk's, bald little head like a wizened skull or an unfledged bird's, surmounted by a steel helmet then new to the army. He went with us up the river to the furthest possible point, whence we could watch the Bulgar sentries, and far along the line to a lofty hill whence we could see the town of Strumitza itself—in Bulgar territory, separated from its Serbian station by some twenty miles of difficult road, as had been decreed by that Treaty of Bucharest (1913), which only the Treaty of Versailles has ever surpassed in folly. And all the way he laughed and joked with us and with every French soldier we met; perhaps intending to teach us the meaning of French equality and fraternity.

And a few days later Sir Bryan Mahon invited me to accompany him up to his British line, which was linked up with the French right. Skirting along the still, small lake of Doiran, where that absurd Bucharest Treaty had fixed the town in Serbian territory and the station in Greek,

we reached a deserted Turkish village called Dédeli high among rocky mountains, then the Head-quarters of Mahon's former 10th Division from Suvla, and there I met many old friends. All the starveling villages thereabouts were Turkish, and not a soul was left in them. As in most Balkan houses up among the hills, the windows had no glass, and the cold toward morning was intense. But the men were not allowed even the shelter of a roof. They dug little pits for themselves along the hillsides, and tied waterproof sheets over the top. Two or three combined to spread their army blankets for covering. But an icy wind was blowing; sometimes at night the rain fell heavily, and for two days it had been snowing hard. There these Irish brigades lay out, and in affectionate remembrance of happier things they called their hills and rocky valleys by the names of Dolly Mount, Bray Head, the Dargle, or Howth.

Many of them had not long to endure or to think of sweet Ireland. It was on November 24th to 26th that I was with them there, and the very next day that blizzard raged which fell like a scourge upon the armies still exposed on the Dardanelles peninsula. On December 7th the Bulgars crossed the Bojimia valley just in front of our lines and stormed up the rocky hills. A few days later our division was ordered to retire in conformity with the French. In some confusion on the night of the 11th-12th, the last of the Irish brigades was withdrawn through Doiran to the railway, and the Bulgars did not attempt to cross the Greek frontier. The main positions for the defence of Salonika were then gradually organised along the fifty-mile front from the Vardar to the Gulf of Orfano near Stavros, right across the base of the three-pronged peninsula that ancient Greeks called Chalcidice. Our part of the line included the two lakes of Langaza and Beshik, and so it remained for some months, gradually getting entrenched, and further protected by a few outlying positions in front along the road to Seres. Salonika was thus converted into a fortified camp, open only on the side of its gulf, and as anyone

who knew the Balkans could have foretold, Serbia ceased to exist.

Month after month I was detained in that beautiful and harassed city as a spectator of the tragi-comedy. It was comic for two largish armies (four French divisions and five British) to be standing upon neutral ground, befriended by a "neutral" Greek and Jewish population who thoroughly enjoyed the opportunities for profits and other thefts upon a lucrative scale, but were intermingled with "neutral" Greek troops full of hostility and always ready to betray vital positions to the enemy, as in the event they did. It was tragic because every now and again the enemy sent by night a Zeppelin over the neutral city, dropping great fiery bombs that at any moment might consume the ramshackle houses, ancient churches, Greeks, Jews, Turks, heretics and infidels, all in a general stew; which in the event also happened. Besides, there was the tragic waste of effort and of money (we were there spending £1,000,000 a day) upon an enterprise without known object. All that vast labour of digging trenches and coiling wire entanglements (the French were using 175 miles of wire for one mile of front), just for the defence of a neutral position against which no attack was in the least likely. It was a disheartening job for the men labouring in rain and mud or snow along the exposed line of mountain overlooking the broad valley of the double lakes, and no one at that time could foresee the ultimate advantage.

For myself, I spent the long weeks listening to the city's customary rumours, or escaping on any horse or lorry that offered far up the Lembat Road to that fortified front, and for five hard and happy days walking right along the edges of the two lakes, amid the gaggle of innumerable wild geese, to the Gulf of Orfano, some forty or fifty miles each way. I was with Ward Price, quite as good a walker as myself, and beside the beautiful gorge that drains the Beshik Lake we found the 29th Brigade entrenching, under General Vandeleur, generous and buoyant as became the artist he was, though

dwelling in a wet and rocky cave. But beautiful as the region seemed, even in mist and snow and drenching rain, its chief interest to me lay in its ghosts. For, looking across the bay to the mouth of the Strymon, I could see Thucydides lingering there and so incurring the sentence of exile that drove him to write the greatest of political histories. And rather further up the river from the few houses that now represent Eion, I could imagine that city of Amphipolis where fell Brasidas, the one attractive Spartan, and where Cleon's leathern lungs breathed their last. In my notes of the place I also find another reference :

" Outside our desert inn near Stavros, a guard of six men and a sergeant (Leinster Fusiliers) lay or sat round a fire under the stormy moon, and when I asked the sergeant in the morning how they had got on, he replied : ' Well, you see, we gets a little charcoal, and we takes a little charcoal, and we heaps up these here leaves as being soft for the hip-bones.'

" The leaves are the brown and withered leaves of plane trees, such as, on climbing up to the village of Stavros on the hill-side of the thin peninsula that leads to Mount Athos, I saw the girls tying together into rustling cloaks, in which to celebrate some immemorial dance that perhaps Aristotle himself may have watched in his happier moments when he was not pondering upon the Virtuous Mean. For I connect Aristotle with this place, perhaps wrongly. Some of the girls were actually playing ball, and all had bound lengths of girdle round their bellies, as the Albanians do, so that they looked as though great with child."

I don't know if I was right in identifying Stavros with Stagira, but anyhow it was a nice quiet place for a philosopher, and in his lucid intervals, when not energizing upon splitting up the indivisible human mind into incomprehensible sections, he might now have enjoyed the contemplation of a British trireme or two putting into the bay with supplies and moving out again.

That was in mid-January, and my feet were for a time purple with frostbite. But early in February I contrived to

secure a pass upon the little railway line up to Florina, familiar to me in the wild but calmer days of twelve years before.<sup>1</sup> Once a day the Greek train went rambling over the forty miles of Vardar marshes, covering nearly eighty miles on its way ; for the Jewish contractor who built the line for the old Turkish Government at so much a kilometre, had thought it a pity that any traveller should lose the opportunity of seeing as much of the marsh as possible.

It is a dreary region, inhabited by wild duck, wild geese, eagles, kites, and crows, symbolic of Balkan races. But here and there a few unhappy villages were trying to cultivate eatables among the slush and fevers. After crossing the long Vardar bridge and meandering over more hours of marsh, the train suddenly turns north and climbs by spasms up a steep incline till it reaches the plateau of Voděna, one of the most beautiful towns. For, as at Tivoli, great cataracts pour down the faces of its precipitous crags, and in the incredible millennium when the Balkan races shall wash themselves instead of killing each other, Voděna may become a popular bath for tourists and valetudinarians. But at that time no one there was thinking of health. The Germans on the platform did not ask how I was, but peered at me with painful curiosity, and then departed to purchase pigs and any copper pans they could find, and I regretted that their object was not the wholesome one of cooking the pigs in the pans, but of using the copper for rifled bands around shells that would make pigs fly, in the form of nitro-glycerine.

Coiling round the northern end of desolate Lake Ostrovo, and passing desolate Sorovitch, where once I had started for a fine journey over mountains to Castoria, I reached Florina, folded between its hills, having accomplished a hundred miles in twelve hours from Salonika. There I was much interested in the Archbishop, who descanted upon the services rendered to the Greek language by St. Chrysostom and St. Gregory, and in the Greek Prefect or Mayor,

<sup>1</sup> "More Changes More Chances," chapter I.

who had been educated at Leipzig and was strongly pro-German, but almost changed his faith when he discovered that I, a mere Englishman, had heard of Protagoras, whom he had, rather strangely, taken as his master in wisdom. But I did not come to converse on language or philosophy. I came to get as near to Monastir as I could since it had been occupied by Bulgars at the end of November. If ever one race more than another had a right to a town in the Balkans, it was the Bulgars who had a right to Monastir. But when I struggled out through the slush to the utmost frontier village and far into the neutral zone towards a white bridge where the first Bulgar post was stationed, the sentries appeared ignorant of my sympathies, for they trained a machine-gun on me, and after enjoying one last brief glimpse of the familiar town, I was obliged to withdraw without explanation. Whereas the Austrian Consul of Monastir drove past me and crossed the frontier unchallenged, as he did twice a week, bearing what news of the Allied forces and intentions he had gathered on the "neutral" soil. Behind his carriage a fine lady in black hat and habit defiantly rode astride. Was it all a tragedy or a comic opera?

The tedium of those many weeks was certainly much relieved by association with a finely confused diversity of interesting people. Many of them I had known before, either in person or by repute. W. Arthur Moore, who had long been our secretary on the Balkan Committee, and had since then distinguished himself in resisting the Russian invasion of Persian Tabriz, was there with his attractive and high-spirited wife. At times he served as my censor, a difficult position for him, but not so difficult as the position he had made for myself in his novel upon the Young Turk revolution, called "The Miracle." For in that he described the romantic figure of a war correspondent who, gallantly waving a cane, and shouting the line "*Cras amet qui nunquam amavit, quique amavit cras amet,*" dashed to death in the thick of the foe. As it was openly announced that this

strange person represented myself, I have carefully avoided such situations, deeming such a reputation hard to die up to.

Sir Edward Boyle, also prominent on the Balkan Committee, was there too, with his youthful and adventurous mother, but they left to assist the Serbian refugees in Corsica. It was always pleasant to visit Sister Augustine (sister of Mrs. Archibald Little, the authority on China) in her House of Mercy, under the Order of St. Vincent de Paul. Beneath her vast white cap peered out a small, wrinkled, india-rubber face, full of shrewdness and humour, gently consoling to distress in every race, but strongly pro-Bulgar all the same. Glad to speak her native English again, she would pour out to me her confident belief that God had inflicted this plague of war upon the world in punishment for modern mankind's abominable wickedness ; and I could only wonder what rainbow in the sky God held in reserve as a pledge that such a deluge of blood would never drown the world again. Sister Augustine died in the following summer.

Mrs. Harley I came to know as one of a gallant family, she being sister to Mrs. Despard and Lord French. She had come to Salonika as head of the Scottish Women's Hospital, and once in January I conducted her with some of her women doctors over the mountains to a small village inn near Hortiach, where they enjoyed the change from rations to Greek diet. But the courageous white-haired old lady was killed by a stray shrapnel-bullet in Monastir, just after the town had been retaken in the following November. Of equal courage with hers was Dr. Lillias Hamilton, commanding a unit of the Wounded Allies Committee, which had struggled down from Mitrovitza round by the Albanian mountains and Ochrida to Monastir before it fell to the Bulgars, she and her nurses being helped on the way partly by men of the British Naval Mission that had been acting on the Danube near Belgrade, partly by the fame of Miss Edith Durham among the Albanian mountaineers. Of all adventurous women few had enjoyed such adventures as

Dr. Hamilton, in India, in South Africa, and especially in Afghanistan, where she had been private physician to the powerful and savage Ameer Abdurrahman in the 'nineties. Many strange and cruel tales she would tell me as we sat in the Russian Hospital, and I urged her to write them down that the record of Afghan life might not be lost. But after the war she withdrew quietly to her work as Warden in the Studley Horticultural College for women in Warwickshire, and I suppose the amazing record died with herself.

One day when I was taking morning coffee, and marvelling at the series of lies called *The Balkan News*, in Floca's restaurant, I saw a bearded man in naval uniform shyly enter and advance with the modest self-consciousness of a don going up Hall at dinner-time. The nervous politeness with which he ordered coffee, as though apologising to the waiter, not merely for his hunger but for his very existence upon earth, told me that he must be a man of exceptional culture, and as I looked at him from time to time, I said to myself : "It is not the uniform that makes the sailor. John Masefield isn't much like a jolly Jack Tar to look at, but he looks it more than you." And then, by some unconscious association, a vision of the Parthenon rose in my mind. Yes ! of a happy day on the Parthenon twenty years before ! And of this sailor-man showing me round and explaining all, with an enthusiasm equal to my own, though all was new to me and to him familiar ! I was right. The sailor-man was Ernest Gardner, master of the Hellenic knowledge that is one of the few kinds of ancient knowledge worth a life's devotion. His knowledge of modern Greek also had given him the post of liaison officer and interpreter of Greek papers and "neutral" propaganda. Why he had been rigged out in naval uniform I could not say, but to me he came like a joyful morning, and many a fine walk and ride we had together, though, to be sure, his riding was the only genuinely sailor-like thing about him, and all the time he kept addressing cautionary restraints to his horse with the utmost politeness.

Together we explored some of the large flattish mounds near Salonika and out upon the lake region, where we discovered relics of prehistoric and Mycenaean life. In a cave or tunnel reaching far into the side of a mound close to the hospitals we found various strata of remains, one stratum of ashes showing that the village upon that site had been burnt down ages ago. But perhaps even more interesting was our exploration of the high round tumuli which in that part of old Thrace generally cover a marble tomb built in the form of a small Greek temple. Probably, so Gardner thought, they marked the burial-place of some Thracian chieftain who had reigned here about the time of Philip of Macedon, and had employed Athenian sculptors to construct his tomb, perhaps with marble from Thasos. One such mound, a few miles up the Lembat road, along which one of our divisions was extended, had been cut open not long before, fully exposing the marble temple, which our economic soldiers were using as a kitchen. To another, rather further away at the village of Laina, we made entrance through a hole in a barn's floor, down which we were dropped with ropes. And below, by the aid of matches, we discerned a large vaulted tomb of rough stone, which had been stuccoed over and perhaps painted red. In front was a façade with good Doric columns, perhaps, thought Gardner, open in the man's lifetime, and then blocked up with great square stones like the rest. He dated the work at about the third century B.C.

And I came to know another University man of a different type—Malcolm Burr, Oxford entomologist, linguist, and road-maker. The peculiarity of this scholar was that he had gathered his knowledge of the Balkans not from history, but from insects. As a boy he had studied the habits and customs of grasshoppers and earwigs, and through this devoted investigation pursued in the Balkans, he had acquired a remarkable knowledge of Greeks, Bulgarians, and other Balkan people. He had discovered no less than 500 undescribed species of earwig in the world, making

800 in all ; which proves the lavish generosity of Nature, for one species might have been enough. But in the course of this peculiar research he had also acquired such intimacy with the Balkan peoples that he could discriminate not merely the earwigs, but Bulgarians, Rumanians, Serbians, Greeks, and Turks at sight, and could address them all in their own language.

An army cannot move without roads, and from Salonika there were only two roads—one to Monastir and the other to Seres, known as the Lembat road. As both were Turkish, one's first endeavour was to get off them and go along the fields, and a third road, which I think was the ancient Egnatian Way to Constantinople, became hopeless after passing Hortiach. The Lembat road was for us the most important, for it had to bear upon its surface big guns, ammunition waggons, motor-lorries loaded up with segments of sheep and oxen, or with piles of bread, cases of biscuit, tea and sugar ; bales of blankets, sacks of tents, bags of officers' kit, limber-carts stuffed with oats and compressed hay, ambulance waggons loaded with sick, motor-cycles hurrying with Intelligence, and motor-cars hurrying with generals. The first thing to be done was to bring the mediæval road up to date. That was a sappers' job, and the sappers, being people of unfailing resource, began collecting "native labour."

There was plenty available—Serbs, Albanians, Bulgars, Greeks, Armenians—and as the pay was about three times the average and included a section of a tent to sleep in, and a loaf of English bread, with olives, sugar, and coffee, the road was soon filled with variegated and picturesque mobs, who practised a babel of eloquence upon each other, but practised nothing else.

Then, by one of those divine inspirations that save the British people even in extremes, someone thought of Captain Burr, who was hanging about in the Staff offices. Obviously he was the man to impose order upon any chaotic collection of species, human or entomological. He set to work, and in

a few weeks in place of a buzzing, crawling mob, he had created a perfectly organised camp of 3000 labourers, arranged in rows of six tents apiece, each tent holding fifteen specimens, if possible of the same genus. The main trouble was to prevent the labourers secreting spades or shovels and taking them into their tents at night to murder members of a different race. Twice when I was staying in the camp violent riots arose, and one could see the whole of the Balkans exemplified in little. Exarchists rushed upon Patriarchists, Catholics upon Orthodox, with all the fury of an Early Christian Council, and the Moslems breathed out slaughter upon all indifferently. Captain Burr's management of the tumult filled me with admiration. He went up and down amid the surging murderers, addressing each religion in its own tongue, and gradually allaying the doctrinal rage for the extirpation of heretics. Also he threatened to cut off the drachma a day that each man received for rations beyond his pay. But it required all an entomologist's knowledge of human nature to re-establish a bloodless peace.

The improvement of the roads around Salonika was costing the British taxpayer about £500 a day, but as the roads might last for a few years even in the Balkans, the money was not grudged so much as the £200 a day which it was estimated the ingenious Greeks stole from our supplies as they arrived. The Navy, for instance, insisted on landing 700 good horses one rainy night. These were sent wandering from camp to camp, and in the morning 120 were missing, of which 60 never returned, but for many a long year served in the peaceful labour of ploughing the Hellenic fields. Many Greeks objected to our presence upon their neutral territory, but after all it bestowed considerable compensations. To mention just one more : it was a great advantage to many poor Greeks to be able to purchase at one drachma (ninepence) apiece the leathern jackets supplied to our men at a price of £1 or 30s. by the British taxpayer.

But certainly the most remarkable man I met in Salonika

was Brigadier-General Philip Howell, Chief of Staff to Sir Bryan Mahon. I had known him slightly when he was in command of the 4th Hussars, in Ireland, and was aware of his intimate knowledge of Balkan affairs, which, I suppose, was the reason of his appointment to Salonika ; for none of the other Staff officers knew much. He often invited me to walk with him along the front lines of our defensive position, especially with a view to his planning shorter routes for supplies to our eastern stations towards Orfano. With this object we once climbed the high mountains above Hortiach ; I am sure in "record" time, for he was the most rapid walker I have ever known, except perhaps Leslie Stephen, and along a level I had to trot by his side. In mind as in body he was a man of extraordinary activity, always on the alert, occupied in fresh plans for carrying the war to a victorious conclusion, keenly critical of official ignorance or torpor, and pitiless in condemnation of waste. His position as Chief of Staff in the British contingent inevitably brought him into conflict with much that the French Staff approved, and, though he at first regarded Sarrail as a fairly able soldier, he, like his own General, was frequently perplexed at his personal and political ambition, his impatience, uncertainty, and wildly contradictory decisions. These he would freely criticise, as was his duty, and very likely his criticisms were even more frank than duty demanded. For he acted on the principle that discretion is generally another name for cowardice, and, as he said, "in a world-war one's own career must take its chance." "Think lightly of earthly place and honour," says our Collect for St. George's Day, and of such things he thought lightly.

Like everyone else who knew anything of the Balkans or the elements of strategy, he had perceived the extreme danger of the Bulgarian threat to enter the war against us in the autumn of 1915. Everyone in the Dardanelles had watched that danger approaching with ever-increasing anxiety, and Howell recognised it even in the midst of the

conflict in France, where he then was. Accordingly he wrote a memorandum on the necessity of holding Bulgaria to our side, or even of inducing her to change her policy before it was too late, and he sent the document privately to a few influential friends, hoping that something might still be done to avert the catastrophe. What influential friend betrayed this private paper, I am uncertain, but somehow it came into the hands of Miss Christabel Pankhurst (of all people in the world !) who published it in a weekly paper called *Britannia*, which she was then editing as war propaganda. Thereupon some of her wilder followers raised a crazy outcry against Howell, and, as a final touch of absurdity, they appealed to the evidence of a spiritualistic medium, who called up the ghost of a Dr. Coulter, dead a century before. This ghost extolled General Howell in the highest terms, saying that he was just the right man in the right place. But, unfortunately, Dr. Coulter had changed since his death into a malignant spirit, working by contraries against the British cause, and craftily praising where most blame was due !

It is no doubt incredible that any sane person should notice such imbecile trash, but a week or two later the *Britannia* further explored its mare's nest by publishing under Howell's name a document written by somebody of no consequence, but having a slight and amateur acquaintance with Balkan affairs. The sworn enemies of Bulgaria, always inflamed with Balkan animosities, thereupon reprinted this palpable forgery, and circulated it to Members of Parliament and other people in authority, on the pretence that Howell was urging us to betray Serbians and Greeks. A Court of Enquiry held upon the subject absolutely acquitted him of any knowledge of the document, or participation in it.

But none the less, the Army Council recalled Howell from his position as Chief of Staff in the early summer of 1916, and he was sent to France on the Staff of General Sir Claud Jacob (IIInd Corps), who wrote of him as "the

best Staff Officer I have ever met, one in ten thousand." Meanwhile Howell had issued a writ for libel against the two chief promulgators of the forgery, but they were spared their natural penalty by his death in action in November of that year. I mention the case as another instance of the insane credulity that affects excitable people in war-time ; also of the blinding hatred that Balkan sympathies may inspire. Even if confirmed by malignant ghosts, the forgery was so flagrantly false that its chief supporter abandoned it. Even if peace with Bulgaria would have shortened the war by two years, any terms of peace that might have been to Bulgaria's advantage would have had to overcome the opposition of her enemies. Yet under such influences our country was deprived of an invaluable servant.

Early in March I was ordered home, touching at Egypt on the way. After the usual risky voyage through the Greek islands, keeping on the surface we made Port Said, and I journeyed straight to Suez, where I found Miss Edith Durham, the "Kralitza" of Albania, working with the Y.M.C.A.—a strange alliance. From Port Tewfik I crossed to the Quarantine Station, and rode to a point where a Patiala section of the Indian Imperial Service Corps was dragging out a monotonous existence, the wretched men complaining that for eighteen months they had done nothing but dig trenches up and down the Canal, and the trenches were filled up with sand as soon as dug. Thence I rode on to a strong outpost the Gurkhas had constructed on the Oyun Moussa (Moses' Well), where water bubbles up from the very top of two low hills (about forty feet high) and forms pools on the summit. Like all miracles, it is difficult to explain. In the desert beyond I found a still stronger outpost, and next day I went some distance up the Canal to Shaluffah, Headquarters of my old Dardanelles friends, the 42nd Division. Riding out some miles into the desert I came to "Manchester-on-Sands," where lengths of trenches, dug within the last three weeks by those Lancashire men, were now filled with sand to the brim, and a black sand-storm was tormenting

the pitmen, millhands, and clerks in their outposts of "Oldham," "Wigan," "Accrington," and other fond memorials of towns in which only the offspring of such places can find cause for affection. Equally fortunate, however, with the beneficiaries of miracle, they received water for drinking, though not for washing, through pipes run under the Canal from the "Sweet Water Canal" in Egypt.

Soon afterwards I went up to the Correspondents' Camp among the palm groves of Ismailia, where I found Bean, Ross, and Lawrence, and with them William Massey, whom I had known as a red-hot supporter of Ulster in the "Covenant" days. Now I saw him firmly attached to the Egyptian campaign, patiently waiting in the vague hope that something might some day happen. And if ever patience was rewarded it was his. For two years later he was able, I think alone of correspondents, to accompany Allenby on the victorious advance to Jerusalem and the actual Armageddon, as his excellent books upon the whole campaign have since testified. There, too, I had the enjoyment of meeting Aubrey Herbert again, and he told me of a scheme he had laid before Sir Edward Grey for sending Miss Durham, me, and himself through Albania to report, with a view to securing the country's independence under the protection of Italy—a remarkable anticipation of what in 1927 we saw actually happening, though at the time the scheme faded away.

I called at General Headquarters in an empty monastery on the bank of the Canal, and was received by Sir Archibald Murray, then commanding the "Canal Sphere," while Sir John Maxwell commanded in Egypt—a peculiar separation of duties, and yet one that perhaps should have been continued; for the removal of Sir Archibald's Headquarters to Cairo appears to have profited little. He had been one of my Censors during the Ladysmith siege, and so received me graciously "for old times' sake," as he said, and explained at length his present scheme of defences by advancing short railways to points out in the desert, flooding the northern

part except for the roads, and moving a large force forward by railway in the north to hold the well-watered villages where the Turks might concentrate 80,000 men as a base for attack. Thus he would leave the desert beyond as our real defence instead of making the vulnerable Canal its own defence, as had hitherto been done. He also spoke freely on the Salonika campaign, admitting the possible service of detaining some of the Germans there away from the front in France, but strongly criticising Sarrail's wild idea of fighting his way up through the mountains to the Danube. Perhaps General Murray was too reserved, too quiet, and "gentlemanly" for the task then laid upon him. I cannot say. But I was deeply grieved when, just a year after my visit in Ismailia, his forces failed twice at Gaza, and he was superseded by Allenby. It is not enough remembered that it was Murray who laid the plan of advance, and constructed the railway from El Cantara to the frontiers of Palestine—that line of "The Milk-and-Honey Express" which was the ultimate instrument of victory. Yet he failed of victory just when it seemed in his hands.

On one of the occasions when I crossed the Canal, I remember leaving my party, and in sheer perversity or love of loneliness, riding far out into the desert alone. It was one of those ghastly days in Egypt on which a south-west wind blows a wet mist over earth and sky, blotting out the sun, though not the heat, and when I thought it time to turn back, I perceived that I had lost my way among the low and stony hills of the desert that show no tracks and are all alike. I realised then, as I was to realise again upon the Syrian desert ten years later, how horrible would be the fate of a man bewildered in that barren space. Happily, both the horse and myself possessed a wild animal's unfailing sense of direction, and both were rejoiced at last to find the camp, safely hidden away in a trough of the waving hills.

Our position in Egypt was not at that time so secure as many imagined; for the Turco-German force was now augmented by our evacuation of the Dardanelles, and was

commanded by that fine officer, Colonel Kress von Kressenstein, who was to defeat us next year at Gaza. Like others, I hardly realised the danger, but, as at other times upon a threatened front in war, I appreciated the remark of an officer's servant at Ismailia : " It often tickles my fancy to wonder what we should do with the baggage if we had to retreat." And, for myself, I had to retreat, baggage and all, as best I could. For my sojourn in Egypt brought me the worst disaster but one that can befall a correspondent. " A dead correspondent," old Baron Reuter used to say, " is the worst correspondent." But a sick correspondent who can hardly move is almost as bad as dead, and whether from that wet and misty wind (called the Khamsin, I think), or from digging a bed into the sand that I expected to be warm and dry, but found to be wet and smelling like a village tomb, I was suddenly afflicted with the unendurable pain of neuritis, sciatica, or some plague of that kind, reducing me to the uselessness of a corpse, with anguish added.

For some days I crawled about Cairo, seeking doctors, and even went out to see the Sphinx, which, like most Egyptian art, seemed to me a hideous and unfruitful monument of eternal death, its mysterious attraction being supplied only by romantic tourists, passionately resolved to imagine it there. But I admit that bodily pain does not conduce to the detection of beauty, and my only course was to allow myself to be hoisted into a steamer, like a sack of chilled meat, and returned to London. Upon the voyage I resolved, in sick discouragement, never to accept work abroad again for war or peace. I was nearing sixty, and had long before fixed sixty as the decent limit for that kind of labour. I had seen Charlie Williams, Bennet Burleigh, Harry Pearse, and others fail above that age and lose their powers, if not their reputation. My resolution was definite and firm. But happily for myself, I have often broken it since.

## CHAPTER IV

### IRISH PATRIOTS

*“Red Rose, proud Rose, sad Rose of all my days !  
Come near me while I sing the ancient ways.”*

“To the Rose upon the Rood of Time”

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

AFTER my return from the Dardanelles, Salonika, and Egypt, I had to endure nearly two years of mere illness, intensified at intervals by long periods of extreme pain. It is useless to record physical misery, but I may say something about the mental misery that was almost immediately added. For while I was living for a few days in what was then an almost unknown village among the Chiltern hills, I suddenly received the news of Easter Week in Dublin (1916), and the arrest of my friend Roger Casement on the coast of Kerry, not far from Tralee. Unable to go to Ireland myself, I could only learn from the papers how the Rising was suppressed, and many of my Irish friends were executed, not at once in the hot blood of vengeance, but in batches morning after morning, the lists being served up to the English breakfast-tables with the bacon, eggs, and marmalade.

As John Dillon, already in those days a veteran, and certainly no supporter of the Rising, wrote in a letter at the time, incalculable mischief was done by those Dublin executions, in that “they poisoned the minds of the Irish people against the Government of England.”<sup>1</sup> No doubt that wise old patriot was right, though I should have thought no extra poison was needed, and throughout those days my

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the *Manchester Guardian* from the House of Commons ; July 18-19, 1916.

most intimate enemies at home kept pouring in upon me the savage hope that all my friends would not only be shot or hanged but drawn and quartered one by one. Among the friends who escaped with life, though sentenced to death, were John MacNeill, the well-known Irish scholar, and the Countess Markievicz, sister of that true religious poet, Eva Gore-Booth. A distinguished and secluded scholar is seldom a practical statesman, but John MacNeill had enough practical sense to perceive that, without foreign aid, such as former Irish patriots had hoped for from France, a rising in Dublin would be a military failure, and as leader of the Irish Volunteers he countermanaged the proposed action on Easter Sunday. "The Countess," who by her personal courage and organising power had for many years endeared herself to the working classes and poverty-stricken people of Dublin, was a rebel born for action, and in after years she showed me with pride the spot on St. Stephen's Green where she had dug trenches during the Rising. Why she had chosen that useless and indefensible position I did not discover, but it was inevitable that a Court-martial should condemn her to death, and only the special appeal of Mr. Asquith, who, I believe, went over on purpose to Dublin, saved her from the martial fate in which I have no doubt she would have gloried. So that vehement and generous spirit survived the Rising by eleven years—till the summer of 1927.

Of those who were executed in succession, I knew Thomas MacDonagh as a scholar of English literature and especially of English verse ; and Patrick Pearse, the finest idealist and most poetic dreamer among them, I had met at his Irish school of St. Enda's in Rathfarnham—a model school, I am sure, but far from lucrative. I have no definite remembrance of having met Thomas Clarke, the rugged old patriot, who had spent many years in English prisons, or John MacBride, once the husband of the beautiful Maud Gonne,<sup>1</sup> and once fighting against us on the side of the Boers ; or

<sup>1</sup> See "Changes and Chances," pp 209-211,

Sean MacDermott, or Joseph Plunkett, who was married in the condemned cell. But James Connolly was my friend, and I had known the honour of speaking upon the same platform with him more than once. Him I admired more than the other fourteen, and he was indeed a wise and remarkable man. Perhaps owing to his upbringing in Ulster, Edinburgh, and England, or to his seven years' residence in America, he possessed a broader and more definite view of life than was common among the Irish patriots. I may repeat what I wrote in the preface to an excellent Life of Connolly by Desmond Ryan :

" Connolly was as good an Irish patriot as could be found, but his patriotism took a form at that time uncommon. He knew the crimes of English government, but he was not perpetually mumbling and grumbling over them. He knew the history of Ireland's wrongs, but he would not harp upon them for ever. If patriotism meant merely the assertion of nationality, he would have agreed with Nurse Cavell, who, at her execution, said that patriotism was not enough. Much of Ireland's misery was due to England's imperialism ; much was inherited from English atrocities in the past. But there were causes of misery which affected not Ireland alone, but England as much—affected indeed the whole world."<sup>1</sup>

On the platform, Connolly was never windy, cloudy, or doctrinaire. He never lost himself, or lost time in those abstract discussions that weary the soul at most Socialist meetings. Whether he was speaking on the wrongs of the working people, the wrongs of women (a favourite subject with him), or the wrongs of Ireland, sentence after sentence came out clear and sharp, always striking immediate points in the actual daily life of the people. Perhaps age and age-long boredom have rather exaggerated my horror of the doctrinaire ; but, at all events, when Connolly got up, I knew there would be no eloquent generalities, no sandy deserts of abstraction. Wit he certainly had, and I liked

<sup>1</sup> "James Connolly : his Life Work and Writings," by Desmond Ryan, with a Preface by H. W. Nevinson (Labour Publishing Company, 1924).

his comparison of the Irish-American politicians to descendants of the serpents banished from Ireland by St. Patrick. And he had imagination, as was proved by his close friendship with "Æ." (George Russell). But imagination never tempted him into sentiment, or wit into the buffoonery that crowds enjoy.

This hatred of theory and talk drove him to take the lead in the Rising of Easter Week, but he had no illusions about the result. He never thought for a moment that some 700 Irish Volunteers and Citizen-Army men would prevail against the regular Army and Navy of England. "We are marching out to be slaughtered," he said to William O'Brien, the Labour leader, as he parted from him on the steps of Liberty Hall. "Personally I have no fears or regrets, I have had a full life, and wouldn't ask for a better end to it." So, with a grim and taciturn joy, he carried on the hopeless battle from day to day, until, twice wounded, he fell into English hands. Decent and civilised people no longer kill the wounded; they no longer shoot their prisoners. But towards Connolly no decency or civilised treatment was shown. He was nursed till he was well enough for killing, though one of his wounds was gangrened. Then, on May 12th, he was lifted from a stretcher into a chair, his hands bound behind him, his head falling on one side through weakness, and they shot him at dawn in Kilmainham Jail. What high service he might have rendered to his country and to mine if he had but lived, I can only conjecture.

Before the war, Connolly had regarded armed risings for merely national aims as out of date, and had hoped that the change in Ireland would be effected "in accord with the principles which underlie and inspire the modern movement of Labour."<sup>1</sup> But at the outbreak of the war he believed another of "Ireland's opportunities" had come, and his indignation was kindled by Mr. John Redmond's acquiescence in England's policy, and his active support of recruiting in Ireland—that "one bright spot" in the darkness, as Sir

<sup>1</sup> Connolly's "Labour in Ireland," p. 210

Edward Grey fondly called it. Humanitarian though he had always been, he proclaimed the call for action. Sick of mere words and rhetoric, as active minds are always sick, he opposed even the very men who were afterwards to share his fate, but who for the moment hesitated, knowing, as he himself knew, the certainty of failure. It was said they even thought of kidnapping him out of the way to keep him still.<sup>1</sup> But he believed that much may be gained even by a failure in arms :

" We believe that in times of peace we should work along the lines of peace to strengthen the nation," he wrote three months before the Rising, " and we believe that whatever strengthens and elevates the working class strengthens the nation. But we also believe that in times of war we should act as in war. We shall continue to teach that ' the far-flung battle line ' of England is weakest at the point nearest its heart, that Ireland is in that position of tactical advantage, that a defeat of England in India, Egypt, the Balkans, or Flanders would not be so dangerous to the British Empire as a conflict of armed forces in Ireland, that the time for Ireland's battle is Now—the place for Ireland's battle is Here."<sup>2</sup>

Far different in method and temperament was another victim of the Rising. Francis Sheehy Skeffington was, I suppose, the only genuine pacifist in Ireland. I once described him as " fearless, true-hearted, going alone like the cat, his hand against every man, sharply contradictory, an unflinching champion of women, a violent pacifist, unpopular, and universally beloved."<sup>3</sup> That description is literally true. In dress, in manner, in opinion, in advocacy of Woman Suffrage, and above all in pacifism, he seemed to court unpopularity. Yet I never met anyone, man or woman, by whom he was not beloved. I suppose it was his immovable sincerity and unselfishness that gained him invariable

<sup>1</sup> " James Connolly," by Desmond Ryan, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Connolly's *Workers' Republic*, January, 1916.

<sup>3</sup> See " Changes and Chances," p. 207.

affection. Everyone might have foreseen that when the Rising began he would go about, like Falkland, "ingeminating peace," and in the very thick of the conflict he ingeminated it.

But in the midst of such vain appeals he was seized by the English and imprisoned in Porto Bello barracks. There he was murdered one morning by the order of an English officer, who sought to expiate the atrocious crime by praying over his victim just before the sentence was carried out. Ultimately that officer was tried and condemned for murder, but reprieved on the ground of insanity. Whether his reputed madness was religious or homicidal, I never heard for certain. I only know that Skeffington's widow, together with their little son, was shamefully attacked in her own house by English soldiers, and has remained the implacable enemy of our country. Indeed her treatment was not calculated to placate. Yet she was sister by marriage to Tom Kettle, one of the most constructive as well as the most eloquent of the Irish leaders of the time, and he had died in France fighting side by side with the English troops "for the rights of small nationalities," as the deceptive phrase coined by our political coiners then ran.

Roger Casement, with whom I had been more closely acquainted than with Connolly or Skeffington, was an Irishman of a type different from either. He was a man of very handsome appearance and attractive personality—tall and powerfully built, with deep black hair and beard, very remarkable blue-grey eyes, and the gentle and persuasive voice commoner among the Irish people than with us. In manner he was very quiet and dignified; indeed, his courtesy and politeness to all around him sometimes seemed a little excessive to a sharp and impatient Englishman like me. They expressed a very emotional and over-sensitive nature, only kept in restraint by long and cruel experience of human abomination. Born of a "Protestant" father and a Catholic mother in the county of Dublin, he was fifty-one at the time of the Rising, and had behind him a record of



*Publishers' Photo Service*

**ROGER CASEMENT**



noble service to mankind in some of the most inhuman regions of the world. He had known the Nigerian Oil Rivers, had been Consul in the Portuguese African colonies, both on the east and west, and again on the Belgian and French Congo. After his experience as Consul at Boma he drew up the Report on the Administration of the Independent State of the Congo (published as a White Paper ; February, 1904), which first fully exposed the atrocities of the Concessionaires in the collection of rubber by natives under cruel compulsion. Owing to his personal knowledge he was able to confirm my own report of the slave system of Portuguese Angola and the islands of San Thomé and Principe when I returned in 1905, and he was the first eye-witness to recognise its truth, though his official position prevented me from using his evidence.<sup>1</sup>

After serving at two places in South America (Santos and Para), he was appointed Consul-General at Rio Janeiro, in 1908, and for the year 1910 was sent by Sir Edward Grey, then Foreign Secretary, to investigate the horrible conditions of rubber collection upon the Putumayo, as narrated in "The Devil's Paradise," by two American travellers, W. E. Hardenberg and W. B. Perkins, in 1909. *Truth* and other London papers had pressed earnestly for enquiry, and, as the Peruvian Amazon Company, whose agents were chiefly charged, was registered with head offices in London, though the Putumayo runs in Peruvian territory, British action became possible, especially since nearly fifty British subjects from Barbados had been recruited as labourers there. The London Company had, probably in ignorance and merely for the sake of dividends, taken over the speculation from Julio Cesar Arana and his partner Hermanos, inhabitants of Iquitos on the Amazon, and it must be said to the Company's credit that later on the Directors sent out a commission of enquiry, upon the report of which some of the shareholders demanded a compulsory winding-up of the business. In March, 1913, it was wound up by order of

<sup>1</sup> See "More Changes More Chances," p. 84.

the High Court of Justice in accordance with the judgment of Mr. Justice Swinfen Eady.

Roger Casement's own Report upon the methods of rubber collection in the Putumayo region is the most appalling revelation of human abomination known to me, though I have witnessed much abomination myself, and have read the records of the Congo Reform Association, of which Lord Cromer was chairman. If anyone still doubts the doctrine of original sin, or believes mankind to have been created only a little lower than the angels, let him study the Blue Book containing Casement's own summary, and the detailed evidence of the witnesses.<sup>1</sup> The floggings of men and women immovably bound in extended stocks, the floggings of mothers before their children's eyes in order to induce the children to collect more rubber, the hangings interrupted just before death, the amputation of arms and legs as torture, the crucifixions head-downwards, the flogging of girls to death, the burnings alive with kerosene—but I need not continue the list of actions prompted partly indeed by greed of money and dividends, but chiefly by that instinct of sensual cruelty so deep-seated in mankind: so far more powerful in man than in any other animal or insect yet discovered. John Morley was fond of quoting the grand sentence of Bacon: "The nobler a soul is, the more objects of compassion it hath," and even had it inscribed on his mantelpiece. But there are not many who even start upon that course to nobleness.

In consequence of the Casement Report, an enquiry was instituted before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Charles Roberts, at that time M.P. for Lincoln, an investigator of undisputed acumen and integrity. The Report of that Select Committee<sup>2</sup> included paragraphs afterwards sent out as a "Circular Despatch to His Majesty's Consular Officers

<sup>1</sup> Miscellaneous, No. 8. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, July, 1912.

<sup>2</sup> House of Commons Report No. 148 of June 5, 1913.

respecting the Employment of Native Labour."<sup>1</sup> From these paragraphs I may quote a few lines :

" The committee are of opinion that the existing provisions of the law might be somewhat extended so as to cover the gravest offences against the person and any practices of forced labour which are akin to slavery. If British subjects made themselves parties by overt act to offences of these kinds in foreign countries, they should be triable in British courts of law.

" Both Sir Harry Johnston and Mr. E. D. Morel, the secretary of the Congo Reform Association, in their evidence agreed that it was the reports of the British consular service, backed by public opinion, which were the true levers of reform in the Congo. In connection with the Putumayo, however, prior to the year 1909, there was less evidence of diplomatic and consular activity."

I have dwelt upon Casement's services to mankind, and upon the official British recognition of them for two reasons. First, after his arrest, certain people tried to make light of his evidence as to the atrocities of rubber collectors on the Congo and the Putumayo, even denying the truth of his reports. That, of course, was to be expected from the large number of shareholders who had looked for their dividends to the methods that Casement exposed. But religious animosity was also dragged in, and I should have been more surprised at that if a similar suspicion had not been raised against E. D. Morel for his exposure of the Congo atrocities, and against myself for my exposure of the Portuguese slavery in Angola and the cocoa islands in the Gulf of Guinea. It was said that all of us three had attacked the " Catholic " States of Belgium, Portugal, and Peru, just because we were " Protestants " acting on behalf of a " Protestant " country. I am quite sure that not one of us had the smallest thought of religious differences one way or other, but the ludicrous charge was made, and if it implies that the subjects or rulers of " Catholic " States are incapable of cruelty, much history will have to be rewritten.

<sup>1</sup> Miscellaneous, No. 10 (1913.)

Secondly, some people charged Casement with treacherous ingratitude for turning against the State that had honoured and rewarded him for his service to it. But Casement's knighthood was bestowed upon him in recognition of public work honourably done. If all titles were bestowed for public service similarly fine, I suppose there would not be so many peers in the House of Lords. He was naturally glad of the recognition, and he expressed his gratitude and appreciation of it in a letter to Sir Edward Grey (June 19th, 1911). Personally I think it a mistake to accept any honour or title for any service, and I have myself acted upon that private rule. But so far as I know, this opinion is shared only by the Quakers, and if one consents to receive an "honour" at all, I do not see how one could acknowledge the gift in better words than one may read in Casement's formal letter.<sup>1</sup> As to the pension, that again is the natural reward always conferred upon a Civil Servant after long and honourable service, and he had as much right to enjoy it as any other insured person has to enjoy an annuity to which he has long contributed by work or payment in advance. He drew it for one year and a month, and did not apply for it after September, 1914.

In support of my contentions on these points, I may quote a letter written by George Bernard Shaw, demanding that Casement should be reprieved as Botha had reprieved De Wet after similar rebellion, or at worst should be treated as a prisoner of war :

" Public opinion," Bernard Shaw wrote, " seems to be influenced to some extent by the notion that because Casement received money for his work from the British Empire, and earned it with such distinction that he became personally famous and was knighted for it, and expressed himself as gentlemen do on such occasions, he is in the odious position of having bitten the hand that fed him. To the people who take this view I put my own case. I have been employed as a playwright, by Germany for many years, and by the

<sup>1</sup> This letter is printed in "The Trial of Roger Casement," edited by G. H. Knott (Notable Trial Series), p. 297

Austrian Emperor in the great theatre in Vienna which is part of his household. I have received thousands of pounds for my services. . . . Am I to understand that it is therefore my duty to fight for Germany and Austria, and that, in taking advantage of the international reputation which I unquestionably owe to Germany more than to any other country to make the first statement of the case against her which could have convinced anybody outside England, I was biting the hand of the venerable Franz Josef, whose bread I had eaten ? I cannot admit it for a moment. I hope I have not been ungrateful. I have refused to join in the popular game of throwing mud at the Germans, and I have said nothing against them that I did not say when many of our most ardent patriots were lighting illuminations and raising triumphal arches to welcome the Kaiser in London. But to Germany's attack on France I remain a conscientious objector, and I must take my side accordingly. Clearly, Casement may claim precisely the same right to take his side according to his convictions ; all the more because his former services prove that he does so without malice.”<sup>1</sup>

In the same letter Bernard Shaw introduced a point which was painfully obvious to all fair-minded people at the time :

“ There are several traitors in the public eye at present. At the head of them stands Christian De Wet. If De Wet is spared and Casement hanged, the unavoidable conclusion will be that Casement will be hanged, not because he is a traitor, but because he is an Irishman. We have also a group of unconvicted, and indeed unprosecuted, traitors, whose action helped very powerfully to convince Germany that she might attack France without incurring our active hostility. As all these gentlemen belong to the same political party, their impunity, if Casement be executed, will lead to the still closer conclusion that his real offence is not merely that of being an Irishman but of being a nationalist Irishman. I see no way of getting round this.”

There was no way of getting round it. Casement was hanged as being a nationalist Irishman, and that was a

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, July 22, 1916.

charge he never would have denied. He had long been pervaded and possessed by his conception of an ideal Ireland. I recognised that spiritual possession even at my first meeting, eleven years before his execution. Unusually sensitive to every form of beauty, he was bewitched by the beauty of his own country, which is indeed the most beautiful country I have known. Unusually compassionate of all who suffer cruelty and wrong, he was consumed with compassionate indignation at his own country's history and condition. Every distinctive Irish quality was his, and only among his own people, especially among the poverty-stricken fishermen and cotters of the west, did he feel himself at home. To him the passion of the Dark Rosaleen was not a romantic mockery but an inspiring enchantment, emanating from an ever-present Being, almost visible, almost incarnate. When upon the death of my former friend, old John O'Leary, in September, 1913, William Yeats sang in his sweet and melancholy way :

“ Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,  
It's with O'Leary in the grave,”

I said to myself, “ It is not for an Englishman like me to speak of Ireland, but Roger Casement still remains alive.”

Unfortunately for himself, Casement returned to Ireland and subsequently retired from the Consular Service just when the spirit of rebellion was being actively fomented in Ulster by Sir Edward Carson (since promoted to the peerage as Lord Carson) and Mr. F. E. Smith (since promoted to the peerage as Lord Birkenhead). Every preparation for violent rebellion had been made or was making. The Covenant had been signed in Belfast ; the two leaders just mentioned had reviewed a military procession at Portadown ; the Ulster Volunteers were formed, and were openly drilling ; cargoes of arms had been received from Germany ; resolutions to welcome the Kaiser rather than Home Rule were freely and publicly expressed.<sup>1</sup> Casement was full of

<sup>1</sup> See “ More Changes More Chances,” pp. 372–376 ; 400–405.

contempt for "Carson's circus," as he called it to me, but these examples of rebellion worked upon his mind. At the time of the Putumayo enquiry in the House of Commons he seemed to me failing in health. The doctors suspected the beginning of a spinal disease, and when he set out to visit his brother in South Africa, I hardly expected to see him again. The Karroo restored his health to some extent, again unfortunately for himself, and he threw himself into the organisation of the Irish Volunteers, whether with the object of defending southern Ireland against the Ulster rebels, or, by a wilder scheme, of uniting with them in a joint defiance of England, I am not sure. But it was in the hope of raising money for the Irish Volunteers that he went to America early in 1914.

In October of the same year, some weeks after the outbreak of war, he sailed for Norway, and at Christiania, he was firmly convinced that the British Minister attempted to bribe his servant, Adler Christensen, to betray him into the power of the British authorities. Though the bribe was stated to amount to £5000 and entire immunity, Christensen, he alleged, refused it and laid the whole matter before his master, who wrote a strong protest to Sir Edward Grey against this breach of what he believed to be international law. I cannot say whether he was right or not in this interpretation. It was an old custom to "put a price on an enemy's head," and very likely it survives in English law. I may notice in passing that Casement had not at that time even touched an enemy soil, or done anything that could involve a charge of treason. But in war-time international law goes for nothing, and it may have been no breach of it for a nation like ours to attempt the murder or kidnapping of a subject upon the territory of a neutral country.<sup>1</sup> Yet I remember the storm aroused when Sun Yat Sen was

<sup>1</sup> An alleged photograph purporting to be a facsimile reproduction of the British Legation's offer to Adler Christensen, together with a translation of Casement's letter to Sir Edward Grey (February 1, 1915), may be seen in "*Sir Roger Casement, Gesammelte Schriften*" (published by Hubers of Diessen, 1917).

kidnapped by the Chinese Embassy in London, and Lord Salisbury insisted upon his release.

But we need not now discuss an abstract question of international law. Casement contrived to cross to Germany, where he hoped to organise an Irish Brigade, such as was formed to fight for France after the expulsion of James II from Ireland ; and such as was again formed to fight for the Boers in the South African War. By these methods he hoped, rather vaguely, as I think, either to strike a blow, however feeble, at the country which he regarded as the secular oppressor of his own, or, if the Germans were successful in the war, to gain for Ireland favourable terms, favourable treatment, or even complete independence. Very few among the Irish prisoners in the German camps—only about fifty—were induced to join the Brigade, though the inducements were strong ; and even if the Germans had obtained command of the sea (which was at that time just possible) and had established a base in Ireland for further attack upon the British coasts, it seems to me doubtful whether they would have granted Ireland any especially favourable position, or could long have insisted upon independence against the will of the English people, who certainly would not have been conciliated by the Irish acceptance of the enemy. Casement would have echoed James Connolly's cry, “ Neither for King nor for Kaiser, but for Ireland ! ” But the price of Ireland's release from the English King would almost certainly have been a large and permanent German garrison in Dublin, protected by a large and permanent German fleet in the main Irish harbours, and in spite of all their promised welcome to the Kaiser, I doubt if even the rebels of Ulster would have acquiesced in that.

For Casement himself, the long months of his residence in Germany were a period of extreme distress and dubitation. As was natural, he found himself distrusted on all sides. The idea of an Irish Brigade was a failure. The Germans regarded him with suspicion as a spy, or with indifference as an idealist. He was almost deadly sick in body, and tormented by

uncertainty. He went from Berlin to Munich, and back again, to various prison camps, and various "Cures." He came to regard England's ultimate victory as assured by her command of the sea. I extract from his letter of December 20th, 1915 :

" That is the terrible factor—the power of the sea—that in the hands of one people means the dominion of the world. 'The Crime against Europe' is an inadequate title. It is the crime against humanity, the world, Nature—this awful power in the hands of one irresponsible, arbitrary, trading, greedy people—the power to shut all the oceans, all the coasts, and to starve whole continents into submission by holding up all the ordinary methods of existence, intercourse and civilised contact. England need never send a single man to the Continent, and yet in the end she will dictate the terms of peace.

" The only hope I had was that the submarines might break through, but that hope has long since gone, and I don't see how any victories on land will change the situation.

" Germany has only one enemy—England—and until they realise that in their souls and every fibre of their being, they can only hit the air."

When he came to hear that a Rising was to be attempted in Easter Week, he resolved to reach Ireland if possible, though well aware of the doom that awaited him. On March 16th, 1916, he wrote from Munich :

" It is the most hopeless position a man was ever in. I cannot conceive a more dreadful situation. To go, I go to far worse than death—death with the cause of Ireland to sustain me would be a joyful ending—but I go to a sham trial, to be wounded in my honour ; to be defamed and degraded with no chance of defence probably, and then to a term of convict imprisonment that will end my days in jail—a convict. For I should not long support the indignities and miseries I should be exposed to.

" If I do not go—and I should be amply justified in stamping on the whole thing—I shall be charged with wrecking the hopes of my people in Ireland, just when they needed help ; or if I send the guns and the handful of men and stay here in safety, then I incur the contempt of all

men as a coward who launched others to their doom and skulked in safety. It is the most dreadful fate to overtake a man I suppose that is possible to conceive.

"The only possible end with any hope at all is death, to be killed at once, to perish in the attempt."

Again, from Berlin, on the 5th of April he wrote :

"It is so hard to see straight even when one is well and not troubled, and I am not well in body, and have not been for long, and then greatly troubled too in mind, so that my remarks are often unjust and hasty and ill-considered.

"The last days are all a nightmare, and I have only a confused memory of them, and some periods are quite blank in my mind, only a sense of horror and repugnance to life. But I daresay clouds will break and brighter skies dawn, at least for poor old Ireland."

Finally, just before he started in a submarine for the Irish coast, he wrote :

"I go to-night with Monteith and one man only of 'the boys,' and I am quite sure it is the most desperate piece of folly ever committed, but I go gladly. It is only right, and if these poor lads at home are to be in the fire then my place is with them."<sup>1</sup>

With those feelings and intentions he set out in the German submarine, apparently accompanied by a small steamer, the *Aud*, flying the Norwegian flag, and containing "the guns and handful of men" that Casement mentioned in his previous letter. The men were twenty German sailors with three officers, the guns were Russian rifles of 1905 pattern, and probably useless. They were recovered by divers after the ship had been stopped by the sloop *Bluebell*, about 90 miles from the south-west coast of Ireland, compelled to follow to Queenstown (138 miles), and sunk by her own crew, who were taken prisoner.<sup>2</sup> That was on Saturday, April 22nd.

<sup>1</sup> These quotations are from facsimiles of Casement's letters in the appendices, *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> The Attorney-General's opening speech at the trial, corrected in the Lord Chief Justice's summing up.

Casement himself had landed on the open coast near Tralee, and walked to an old fort near Ardfert, where he was found (April 21st), and arrested. From a letter which he wrote only a few days before his execution, I may quote his own account of his landing in Ireland :

“ When I landed in Ireland that morning (about 3 a.m.) swamped and swimming ashore on an unknown strand, I was happy for the first time for over a year. Although I knew that this fate waited on me, I was for one brief spell happy and smiling once more. I cannot tell you what I felt. The sandhills were full of skylarks, rising in the dawn, the first I had heard for years—the first sound I heard through the surf was their song as I waded in through the breakers, and they kept rising all the time up to the old rath at Currshone, where I stayed and sent the others on, and all round were primroses and wild violets and the singing of the skylarks in the air, and I was back in Ireland again. As the day grew brighter I was quite happy, for I felt all the time it was God’s will that I was there. The only person alive—if he be alive—who knows the whole story of my coming, and why I came, with what aim and hope, is Monteith. I hope he is alive and that you may see him and he will tell you everything, and then you will know that the very thing I am blamed for, and am dying for, was quite what you would have wished me to do. It is a cruel thing to die with all men misunderstanding—misapprehending—and to be silent for ever.”<sup>1</sup>

It was the last time that Casement was to see violets and primroses, or, as the familiar Irish song says, “ to hear the sweet lark singing in the clear air of the day.” But what were the aim and hope known to Monteith alone ? Knowing Casement as I did, I cannot doubt that the names of the rebels in Easter Week were involved, and he feared to betray them. When arrested and taken to Tralee police barracks, he asked to see a Dominican priest, though he himself was still a “ Protestant,” and Father F. M. Ryan, O.P., was brought to him. Casement then said :

<sup>1</sup> Passage from a long private letter, written in the condemned cell in Pentonville gaol (July 25th), to his sister Mrs. Nina Newman (who died in 1927).

"I want you to tell the Volunteers in the town and elsewhere to keep perfectly quiet. Tell them I am a prisoner, and that the rebellion will be a dismal, hopeless failure, as the help they expect will not arrive."

After some hesitation the priest gave the message to the Tralee Volunteers, at the same time informing the head constable. This account was published in the *Kildare Observer* and the *Dublin Evening Mail* of May 20 in that year, and was further confirmed by a letter written by Father Ryan himself to Mr. Gavan Duffy, who was Casement's solicitor at the trial (July 12, 1916) :

"Sir Roger Casement saw me in Tralee on April 21, and told me he had come to Ireland to stop the rebellion then impending. He asked me to conceal his identity, as well as his object in coming, until he should have left Tralee, lest any attempt should be made to rescue him. On the other hand he was very anxious that I should spread the news broadcast after he had left."

During my last interview with him in Brixton gaol, Casement told me himself that his object in coming to Ireland at that time was to tell his friends not to attempt the Rising, for it was useless to expect any adequate help from the Germans, and he knew that the "guns and handful of men" on the *Aud* were sent almost in mockery. Of course, if the Rising broke out in spite of his advice Casement was ready to join in it, but he would have first joined with Professor John MacNeill in his attempt to countermand it. In a statement issued on the day after the execution, the Government, in defence of their action as against the very numerous and influential appeals for reprieve, asserted that "the suggestion that Casement left Germany for the purpose of trying to stop the Irish Rising was not raised at the trial, and is conclusively disproved, not only by the facts there disclosed, but by further evidence which has since become available." Any Irishman could understand Casement's reasons for not raising the plea at the trial, but what the

further evidence available may have been, I cannot conjecture.

My friend was taken first to the Tower of London, where he was treated with gross indignity, and was then transferred to Brixton gaol, where he asked that I might be allowed to visit him on June 20th, a few days before his trial began. In my diary of the same evening I wrote :

"Called on Massingham about Casement before the *Nation* lunch, and he said he had seen Haldane, who advised making much of German treachery in deserting him. I strongly opposed this, saying that the only line was to declare Ireland's right of rebellion as a subject nation, just as Garibaldi rebelled and might well have called in France or Russia to help against Austria, as in fact Cavour did. Massingham said that might be a fine and Quixotic attitude, but would not save Casement's neck. I hope I should have the courage not to care much about that if I were a rebel for Ireland, or for England either, should we ever come under foreign domination.

"Very crowded *Nation* lunch at the N.L.C., with Edwin Pears, Arthur Ponsonby, and all the staff there. Discussion mainly on Ireland and on the new War Minister (news of Kitchener's drowning had reached us at the lunch a fortnight before, while we were discussing the Jutland battle). I came away early and went by tram to Brixton prison, where after waiting long I was shown into a largish, scantily furnished room, and Casement was soon brought in by an old warder, who was polite. R.C. looked much aged, wrinkled and careworn ; his hands at first worked nervously, sometimes being passed quickly over his face and eyes, to hide or suppress emotion and even tears, that seemed to come especially when I mentioned his cousin, Gertrude Bannister, and Mrs. N. F. Dryhurst, and gave their messages. But his eyes were straight and frank and blue as ever, his manner charmingly polite, speaking to the warder as a friend, and hoping our three-quarters hour conversation was not keeping him too long.

"He spoke much of his time in Germany, his dislike of the official North Germans, but affection for the Bavarians, and his belief in the courage and patience of the whole people. Said the effect of the war was much more visible in Berlin than in London, so far as he had seen London from taxis.

The Germans, he thought, would willingly make peace, surrendering the occupied parts of Belgium and France, for they were longing for peace but afraid of Asquith's threat and of national destruction. They felt no animosity towards the French, but thought we had stabbed them in the back. Even towards us the hatred was subsiding, but all the people were united in self-defence against their encirclement by enemies.

"He had grown very tired of the North German's wooden face, and thought them all stupid and unimaginative, having no penetration, but overtaught in their schools and universities. He spoke of having spent Christmas with Americans in Dresden. He frequently sighed that things had not gone otherwise. I supposed he was thinking of the Sinn Fein Rising, but I did not care to press him with questions. He said he knew more than anyone, but supposed he should keep silence to the end. He asked what I thought about his making an address from the dock, and said perhaps it would be better to say nothing. I strongly opposed this, reminding him what great effect speeches from the dock by Irish patriots always had.

"Then he talked much of the Turks, and of a Halil Bey, who had told him in Berlin that the Serbs were the least brutal of their enemies in the war of 1912. He spoke in high praise of Bernard Shaw's letter on Sinn Fein in the *Daily News*, and asked that Shaw would write again about a German poet (I didn't quite catch the name) who was detained in Java, unable to return. He also asked me to write to Shaw for a copy of a pamphlet upon the Denshawai case.<sup>1</sup>

"He spoke much about Sheehy Skeffington and other victims of the Rising, and finally he very politely said that no Englishman except Wilfrid Scawen Blunt and myself could understand the Irish question, but he never counted me as an Englishman.

"Forbidden to shake hands, we parted with salutations, and as he returned to his cell, he waved his arm to me in the Irish fashion. I suppose he will be hanged in a month, and

<sup>1</sup> I wrote to Bernard Shaw about this, but he denied ever having written such a pamphlet. All he had ever written on the subject was "The Denshawai Horror" in his Preface to "John Bull's Other Island." As, however, I possessed a copy of the pamphlet ("The Critics of *The White Prophet*," a separate Preface to Hall Caine's novel) I was able to refresh its author's memory.

I shall never see that singularly noble and attractive figure again.”<sup>1</sup>

But I was to see him twice again, though never to speak with him. The trial, which was what is termed a “Trial at Bar,” began on June 26th, and lasted four days. Casement’s leading counsel was Mr. Alexander Sullivan, Second Serjeant at the Irish Bar, and also a barrister of the English Bar. His second counsel was Mr. Thomas Artemus Jones; and John Hartman Morgan, Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of London, who had at one time worked

<sup>1</sup> During this interview in Brixton gaol, Casement, after speaking with gratitude of the numerous letters I had been writing in praise of his past career to the *Nation* and other papers, said how deeply disappointed he was at the view expressed by Mr. R. B. Cunningham Graham in a letter in the *Nation* of May 13th. When I saw the announcement of his letter in the index to the paper, I said to myself, “Thank God, here is a strong ally!” But Cunningham Graham’s intention was far different. It may be gathered from my answer, which appeared in the *Nation* of the following Saturday (May 20):

“I have read Mr. Cunningham Graham’s letter in answer to mine with deep disappointment. War brings strange disappointments, but it is still a bitter thing when one finds a man whom one has admired for many years transformed into something entirely different from one’s ideal of his nature.

“I am not going to follow Mr. Cunningham Graham’s example in contempt of Court by arguing about a case still on trial. I will merely remark that when Mr. Cunningham Graham exclaims, ‘Far be it from me to urge severity,’ and then goes on to pour out venomous abuse and scornful innuendo against a distinguished man who stands on trial for his life, he appears to me to be guilty of the kind of inconsistency sometimes known as cant.”

In my support stood Robert Lynd, who has since risen to high distinction in journalism. He wrote in the same number of the *Nation*:

“Surely Mr. Cunningham Graham might have left the blackening of Sir Roger Casement to a meaner hand. As the case of Sir Roger is at present *sub judice*, I do not propose to discuss the question of his guilt or innocence in regard to the accusations made against him. But I must protest when one of the least self-seeking and most open-handed of men—a man who has lived not for his career but for the liberation of those who are oppressed and poor and enslaved—is dismissed with all the clichés of contempt.... Even those who, like myself, have been diametrically opposed to his recent policy, can never lose our admiration and affection for everything in him that was noble and compassionate.”

For myself, I was so much astonished and disappointed at the tone and intention of Mr. Cunningham Graham’s letter that for many years I followed the ancient Roman manner of “renouncing friendship,” and that was a grief to me when I considered how great his services to liberty and literature had been.

for me when I edited the literary page on the *Daily Chronicle*, was admitted by the Lord Chief Justice to act as *amicus curiae*. The prosecution was undertaken by Sir Frederick Smith, who as Attorney-General, appointed himself, and was, no doubt, greatly assisted by his knowledge of rebellion acquired during the threatened "Rebellion of Ulster" in which he had played so prominent a part five and four years earlier. As is mentioned in the Introduction to the published history of the trial :

"There was piquancy in the fact that the Attorney-General had taken so prominent a part in the Ulster movement, and that Casement appealed to the movement as an excuse for his treason."<sup>1</sup>

Piquancy ! To the detached observer, no doubt the situation was piquant.

The Court of King's Bench was presided over by the Lord Chief Justice (Lord Reading), with Mr. Justice Avory and Mr. Justice Horridge as his colleagues, and the trial was held in the Law Courts of London. The procedure followed the antiquated custom, exemplified in the case of *The King v. Lynch*, thirteen years before, when Mr. Arthur Lynch was condemned to death for treason in assisting the Boers in the South African War, but after a brief term of imprisonment was released, sat as a Member of Parliament, and still (1928), in perfect liberty, walks the suburb of Hampstead. The Usher of the Court cried, "Oyez," the King's Coroner stated the charge of "High Treason, by adhering to the King's enemies elsewhere than in the King's Realm—to wit, in the Empire of Germany—contrary to the Treason Act, 1351, 25 Edward III, statute 5, chapter 2," and Sir F. E. Smith stated his case and called the witnesses for the prosecution. Mr. Sullivan then, no doubt quite rightly, moved to quash the indictment on the ground of misinterpretation of a clause in the Statute of Edward III :

" It shall be treason if a man do levy war against our Lord the King in his realm, or be adherent to the King's enemies in his realm, giving to them aid and comfort in the realm or elsewhere."<sup>1</sup>

The contention of the defence was that the words " or elsewhere " governed only the words " aid and comfort in the realm," and had no application to the words " be adherent to the King's enemies." On the strength of another Statute (Henry VIII, 35) the Lord Chief Justice overruled the objection, and any rational or non-legal person would agree that he was right. The whole prolonged argument, though the plea was legally justified, only confirmed me in my previous resolve never to accept legal defence upon a political charge, or any other charge involving questions of principle. To slip through the legal loophole of a comma, as was argued in this case, would, I hope, appear to me an unworthy escape even from death on the gallows.

The real defence was an appeal to a principle outside the law, and, as I think, above the law. It was stated first by Mr. Sullivan in his speech for the defence :

" Sir Roger Casement was not in the service of England. He was in the service of the United Kingdom ; he was in the service of His Majesty in respect of the whole Empire of His Majesty's dominion. In Ireland you have not only a separate people, you have a separate country. An Irishman's loyalty is loyalty to Ireland, and it would be a very sorry day for the Empire when loyalty to one's own native land should be deemed to be treason in a sister country."

On a secondary point, suggesting that fear of an Ulster invasion rendered a Volunteer force essential for the preservation of life in Southern Ireland, Mr. Sullivan described the condition of the country in sentences that must have appealed strangely to the prosecuting Attorney-General himself :

" Observe the state of affairs as you have found it proved in evidence," he said. " There was in the north of Ireland an armed body of men ostensibly marching about in Belfast, deliberately originated with the avowed object of resisting

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67-133.

the operation of an Act of Parliament which had the approval of the rest of the country. They armed, and nothing was said to them ; they drilled, and nothing was said to them ; they marched and countermarched ; the authorities stood by and looked at them. The police were powerless. They had great forces behind them, great names, and men of high position.”<sup>1</sup>

Yes, the rebels of Ulster had behind them great names and men of high position. No one in Court had any difficulty in remembering one great name, one man of high position.

At the end of the third day, Mr. Sullivan broke down with excitement and fatigue. The defence was continued by Mr. Artemus Jones and Professor Morgan. Then followed the closing speech for the Crown, and I well remember the peculiarly affected Oxford accent with which the Attorney-General concluded his demand for the verdict of guilty, in the words : “ If you should come to the conclusion that the Crown has proved its case, however painful the duty, it is one from which you cannot, and you dare not, shrink. I have discharged my responsibility in this case : do you discharge yours.”

Lord Reading then summed up. As I wrote at the time : “ No chance of escape was given, and indeed there was none.” When the jury returned after an hour’s deliberation, no one doubted the verdict. When asked by the King’s Coroner “ what he had to say for himself why the Court should not pass sentence and judgment upon him to die according to law,” Casement, looking, as I then wrote, by far the noblest man in Court, and the happiest, too, read a statement that he had previously written, and that should, in my opinion, have formed his only defence. He began by denying the jurisdiction of an English Court, and appealing from the Court to his own countrymen :

“ I am being tried,” he said, “ not by my peers of the live present, but by the peers of the dead past ; not by the civilisation of the twentieth century, but by the brutality of the fourteenth ; not even by a statute framed in the

<sup>1</sup> “Trial of Roger Casement,” Edited by G. H. Knott, pp. 150, 151.

language of an enemy land—so antiquated is the law that must be sought to-day to slay an Irishman, whose offence is that he puts Ireland first.

“ Loyalty is a sentiment, not a law. It rests on love, not on restraint. The Government of Ireland by England rests on restraint, and not on love ; and since it demands no love, it can evoke no loyalty. . . . With all respect I assert this Court is to me, an Irishman, not a jury of my peers to try me in this vital issue, for it is patent to every man of conscience that I have a right, an indefeasible right, if tried at all under this statute of treason, to be tried in Ireland, before an Irish Court, and by an Irish jury. This Court, this jury, the public opinion of this country England, cannot but be prejudiced in varying degree against me, most of all in time of war.”

Turning sharply from this personal side, he took up the hideous story of Ireland’s sufferings at the hands of England :

“ Ireland has outlived the failure of all her hopes—and yet she still hopes. Ireland has seen her sons—aye, and her daughters, too—suffer from generation to generation always for the same cause, always meeting the same fate, and always at the hands of the same Power ; and always a fresh generation has passed on to withstand the same oppression. The cause that begets this indomitable persistency, the faculty of preserving through centuries of misery the remembrance of lost liberty, this surely is the noblest cause men ever strove for, ever lived for, ever died for. If this be the cause I stand here to-day indicted for, and convicted of sustaining, then I stand in a goodly company and a right noble succession.”

He went on to attack the English leaders who had gone over to Ulster with the object of stirring up civil war there for their own party purposes in England. Having described the tactics and the incitements of such persons, he continued :

“ The difference between us was that the Unionist champions chose a path they felt would lead to the Woolsack ; while I went a road I knew must lead to the dock. And the event proves we were both right. The difference between us was that my ‘ treason ’ was based on a ruthless sincerity that forced me to attempt in time and season to carry out in

action what I said in word, whereas their treason lay in verbal incitements that they knew need never be made good in their bodies. And so, I am prouder to stand here to-day in the traitor's dock to answer this impeachment than to fill the place of my right honourable accusers.

"In Ireland alone in this twentieth century is loyalty held to be a crime. If we are to be indicted as criminals, to be shot as murderers, to be imprisoned as convicts because our offence is that we love Ireland more than we value our lives, then I know not what virtue resides in any offer of self-government held out to brave men on such terms. Self-government is our right, a thing born in us at birth, a thing no more to be doled out to us or withheld from us by another people than the right of life itself—than the right to feel the sun or smell the flowers, or to love our kind. It is only from the convict these things are withheld for crime committed and proven—and Ireland that has wronged no man, that has injured no land, that has sought no dominion over others—Ireland is treated to-day among the nations of the world as if she were a convicted criminal. If it be treason to fight against such an unnatural fate as this, then I am proud to be a rebel, and shall cling to my rebellion with the last drop of my blood. If there be no right of rebellion against a state of things that no savage tribe would endure without resistance, then I am sure that it is better for men to fight and die without right than to live in such a state of right as this."

With a kindly word to the jury, thanking them for their verdict, and assuring them that he made no imputation upon their truthfulness and integrity, he concluded. Looking to the judges, I saw that clerks had put soft black things, like battered college-caps, upon the head of each, and I heard the usher command silence while sentence of death was passed. The Lord Chief Justice then sentenced my friend to be hanged by the neck till he were dead, and prayed, so strangely! that the Lord might have mercy on his soul. As though it were on *his* soul that mercy was most needed!

That morning I had been sitting with Mrs. Alice Stopford Green, the Bannisters (Casement's first cousins), and Mrs. Gavan Duffy on the bench in front, so that Casement saw

me when he came in, smiled, and bowed, I rising to bow in return. But in the afternoon I was crowded at the back of the Court, and though I waved to him at the very end, I fear he did not see me. I had it in mind to shout, "God save Ireland!" though at the risk of imprisonment for the prayer. Perhaps as an Englishman I had no right to pray, and the Irish would probably have blamed me for it. But still I wish I had uttered the prayer, for it was the right moment, and might perhaps have increased the shame of the prosecution, though indeed there are some hides that no irony can pierce, and the successful career foretold by Casement for such as chose a different path from himself has been completely fulfilled.

An appeal was heard in the Court of Criminal Appeal in London, on July 17th, before five judges, with Mr. Justice Darling presiding. The Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General (Sir George Cave) were present, but were not called upon to take part. For when Mr. A. M. Sullivan had restated his interpretation of the ancient Statutes of Edward III and Henry VIII at great length and with extraordinary acumen, Mr. Justice Darling and the other four dismissed the appeal on purely legal grounds. The only noticeable point to myself was Sir C. Darling's determination to display his literary knowledge by dragging in a reference to Milton's lines in praise of Lord Coke as a lawyer.

I sat on the solicitors' bench in front, and when Casement was brought in by two warders, he saw me at once, smiled, and waved his hand. He looked much worn, but quite himself, and contemptuous of all this legal discussion. He was dressed in an ordinary grey suit, rather wrinkled, as though long laid aside. During the judgment he sat quite still, just smiling to me once, as though to say, "What's all this nonsense about?" Gavan Duffy told me the judgment was ignorant and confused, but to me that did not seem to matter much. For the fact of treason was beyond dispute, granted that Ireland was not a separate country, but "subject to the Crown." All was over in about half-an-hour.

I waved to Casement, and he waved, smiled again, and disappeared. That was the last time I saw him.

I occupied the remaining days of his life in helping to organise appeals for his reprieve. I trusted chiefly to the case of Mr. Arthur Lynch, who, as mentioned above, though under death sentence upon the same charge had been speedily released, and could be met daily at large and enjoying life. I also had some hope in the sympathy extended by the English people to such notorious rebels as Garibaldi, Kossuth, William Tell, and many others, some even in our own history, not to speak of the support given to Greece, Bulgaria, and Albania in their rebellions against the Turkish Empire. Of course, I found that, in spite of the proud motto, "*Semper Eadem*," the Law does not abide the same, but is influenced by times, seasons, and respect of persons. What was possible for Mr. Arthur Lynch in 1903 was not possible for another Irishman in 1916, and the British enthusiasm for rebels is warm in direct variation with their distance in time and space. Yet I still believe Casement's life would have been saved by the appeals, just as the lives of other Irish rebels of that year were spared, but for the action of the Government in diverting sympathy by raising a personal issue that had nothing whatever to do with the case.

Early in June a member of the Government had called various London editors together, and informed them that in searching among Casement's papers they had discovered a diary alleged to be in his handwriting, though his name did not occur upon it ; and this diary was held to prove that for some years he had been addicted to what is known as "perversion" or "unnatural vice." The diary was afterwards exhibited in the Home Office to many curious enquirers, and care was taken that gossip about it should be widely spread among leaders of Society—not a difficult task. It is the one form of vice to which I feel no temptation, but all doctors and physiologists now recognise it as a common kind of mental or pathological aberration, to say nothing of its habitual prevalence in many countries. Finding that

the prurient chatter upon the subject was becoming an obstacle to the numerous petitions for reprieve, I protested, in the first place, that if the condemned man had seduced numerous girls and flung them on the street, nothing much would have been said about it ; and, in the second place, that those who withdrew their names from the petitions on this account must be arguing that everyone guilty of this particular form of vice ought to be hanged, which would have necessitated the employment of several more executioners. Finally, nine days before the execution, I wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* after giving various other reasons why it would be just to spare Casement the final degradation :

" It is common knowledge that insinuations against Casement's private character have been passing from mouth to mouth. These insinuations have no bearing on the charge of which he is convicted, nor have they been established or mentioned in Court. They are said to be founded on documents discovered by the police among Casement's property. How the alleged contents of these documents came to be whispered abroad I cannot say. In certain Continental countries one could imagine the police, or even the Government, spreading such rumours with the object of poisoning the public mind against a man whom they wished to destroy. I am told this was a common device also of the Inquisition in old days. But in the case of an English Government and English legal or police authorities such conduct is, of course, unthinkable. I can find no explanation. I can only say that anyone who may have attempted by such means to blacken the character of, and prejudice our feelings towards, a man who stands in acute danger of a degrading and hideous death is, in my opinion, guilty of a far meaner and more loathsome crime than the worst that could possibly be unearthed in the career of the criminal himself."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Manchester Guardian*, July 25th, 1916. That noble paper, under its famous editor, Mr. C. P. Scott, who happily for the world still (1928) survives, had before this published a leader urging the grave political and moral mistake of executing a political offender as though he were a common criminal, and thus adding yet one more to the long roll of Irish martyrs, and driving the Irish people back upon the old days and ways of hostility to Great Britain, despair of constitutional reform, and resort to lawless and vindictive methods. (July 19th, 1916.)

My ironic assumption that no English Government or English officials could ever have been guilty of this mean and loathsome crime, was patently contradicted by *The Times*, in a leading article published the morning after the execution. That powerful paper, which usually supports any Government action, there protested against "certain attempts made to use the Press for the purpose of raising issues which had no connection whatever with the charges on which Casement was tried. These issues," *The Times* continued, "should either have been raised in public in a straightforward manner or they should have been left severely alone." In conclusion the leading article said that the State Trial could only be weakened by "inspired innuendoes, which, whatever their substance, were irrelevant, improper, and un-English."

If only *The Times* had entered that just protest a month earlier, how different the result might have been! Our petitions were strongly supported. One of them, for instance, instituted by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, was signed by nearly all the most distinguished literary and scientific men of the time, such as Arnold Bennett, Hall Caine, G. K. Chesterton, John Clifford, Edward Clodd, William Crookes, Sir Francis Darwin, John Drinkwater, Sir James Frazer, Sir Edward Fry, John Galsworthy, A. G. Gardiner (then editor of the *Daily News*), G. P. Gooch, Maurice Hewlett, Robert Horton, Jerome K. Jerome, John Masefield, H. W. Massingham, Robertson Nicoll, Sydney Olivier, C. P. Scott, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, the Bishop of Winchester (Edward Talbot), and Israel Zangwill. But our efforts were repeatedly frustrated by those "inspired innuendoes," and if, as I suppose, the object of the people who spread the innuendoes was to secure Casement's execution by blackening his character, without giving him a chance of self-defence, their murderous object was achieved.

On July 31st, I made a final effort in the House of Commons, and was well received by T. P. O'Connor, Josiah Wedgwood, William Byles, John Burns, Noel Buxton, and

many others. But when R. L. Outhwaite introduced me to John Redmond, the leader of the constitutional Home Rule party turned rudely away at the mention of Casement's name, merely saying, "Please don't," and no more. Mr. Asquith received Gertrude Bannister, Casement's first cousin, in his private room, and told her a reprieve might be possible if she would plead his insanity. This she refused, and then we knew that all was done that man could do and all was done in vain, though even as late as August 2nd, Philip Morrell, Eva Gore-Booth, and others made a last desperate appeal to the King himself. On the day before his death, Casement wrote on a postcard to his cousin :

"To-morrow, St. Stephen's Day, I die the death I sought, and may God forgive the mistakes and receive the intent—Ireland's freedom."

That night a few of us sat for many hours in the house of Mrs. Green, historian and historian's widow, and while Casement in his cell was watching for the dawn of his death, that remarkable woman continued to speak to us of life and of death with a courage and wisdom beyond all that I have known, unless it be in the discourse of Socrates during the hours before his own execution. So wise she was, so cheerful, and even humorous.

They killed him in Pentonville gaol at 9 o'clock in the morning (August 3rd). "What a beautiful morning," he characteristically observed when he stepped out upon the scaffold. He was calm and exalted. "I die for my country," he said at the last moment, and he died instantly, his face after death appearing calm and beautiful. Two Irish priests were with him to the last. The Home Office refused to give up his body to his cousin, remarking that it was the property of the Home Secretary. The rights of property were respected.

Next day I had to go to Oxford. "I am the Mother of Holy Hope," cries Wisdom in an ancient book,<sup>1</sup> and in

<sup>1</sup> Ecclesiasticus xxiv. 18. (The verse is omitted in the Revised Version.)

spite of all her absurd self-importance and her effeminate preciosity, Oxford is always that to me. But she is also the Mother of Consolation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lest my estimate of Roger Casement should seem prejudiced in his favour, I may quote the following passages from a writer of recognised moderation :

" In that bitter campaign (the Congo), no weapon was left unused on either side, and if it had been possible to smirch Casement's name, by any means, it would have been blackened. Yet he came out from all that propaganda and counter-propaganda famous through Europe, and carrying such prestige that he was the inevitable choice for a similar mission of inquiry into the methods of rubber-collecting in the Amazon basin. His report on the Putumayo region carried the most damning authority. Few reputations showed brighter than his, when in 1912 he retired from the Consular Service with a knighthood.

" Knight-errant he was ; clear-sighted, cool-headed, knowing as well as any that ever lived how to strengthen his case by temperate statement, yet always charged with passion.

" I say that R. C. still seems to me one of those who in my time did real and conspicuous service to humanity, and seems also one of the most noble creatures I have known.

" No fair mind can deny that the British Government was fully entitled to execute him, or that many men in authority could have felt it their inevitable duty to carry out that sentence. But the meanest thing I have known to be done by the tools of a Government, was the private circulation of statements about his sexual morality, which were calculated to offset the widespread public feeling that it was wrong to hang such a man. No surer way of obtaining the widest publicity of scandal could have been adopted ; not even though it had been proved in open court that the alleged offences had been committed in a London park."

" Experiences of a Literary Man," by Stephen Gwynn, pp. 259-261.



*G. ogiegan*

ALICE STOPFORD GREEN



## CHAPTER V

### WAR AND PEACE

*“ Satourne anon, to stynte stryf and drede,  
Al be it that it be agayns his kynde,  
Of al this stryf he can a remedy fynde.  
‘ My deere doughter Venus,’ quod Satourne,  
‘ My cours, that hath so wyde for to tourne,  
Hath more power than woot any man.  
Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan ;  
Myn is the prisoun in the derke cote ;  
Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte ;  
The murmur, and the cherles rebelling ;  
The groyning, and the privee empoysonyng.  
I do vengeance and pleyn correctioun,  
Whiles I dwelle in the signe of the lyoun.  
Myn is the ruen of the hiche halles,  
The fallyng of the toures and the walles  
Upon the mynour or the carpenter.  
I slowh Sampson in schaklyng the piler.  
And myne be the maladies colde,  
The derke tresoun, and the castes olde ;  
Myn lokyng is the fadir of pestilens.’ ”*

CHAUCER : “ The Knights Tale ; ” lines 2455 ff.

*“ O cease ! must hate and death return ?  
Cease ! must men kill and die ?  
Cease ! drain not to its dregs the urn  
Of bitter prophecy !  
The world is weary of the past——  
O might it die or rest at last ! ”*

SHELLEY’S “ Hellas.”

THE next two years were times of deep depression and disquietude for the country, and consequently for myself. The overthrow of Mr. Asquith by Mr. Lloyd George (December, 1916) inevitably suggested the scriptural question, “ Had Zimri peace ? ” The collapse in turn of Roumania, Russia, and Italy in the field enabled the Central Powers to concentrate renewed forces upon the

Western Front. Our gallant struggles upon the Somme and at Passchendaele resulted in little but slaughter. Nivelle's wild promises of penetration between Soissons and Rheims resulted in failure and mutiny, and the German submarines kept reducing England to shorter and shorter rations. On the field, the only points of light were the capture of Bagdad (March, 1917), and of Jerusalem (December, 1917), as though to prove that ultimately the "Easterners" had been justified in their strategy. But then came Ludendorff's final onslaught (March, 1918), when hardly anyone among the Allies dared to hope, except Foch alone. From time to time, especially towards the end of 1916, some shadowy chance of peace by negotiation appeared, but the cries of "Peace Chatter" and "Peace Offensive" raised by widely read papers laughed it to scorn, and the daily list of casualties continued to inspire residents at home with a sense of noble self-sacrifice. Even Lord Lansdowne's letter to the *Daily Telegraph* (November 29, 1917), suggesting that we had no desire of annihilating Germany as a great Power, or of dictating to the Germans their form of government, but proposed an international pact to give the world security—even this was received with derision by the advocates of "a fight to the finish" and "a knock-out blow."

It is true that, some weeks later (January 31, 1918), a large number of us gathered in Lansdowne House, as arranged by that unbending Liberal, F. W. Hirst, to congratulate the writer of the letter on his purpose. Lord Loreburn, an ex-Lord Chancellor, read an address, keeping his eyeglass fixed tight upon a written paper, though he had practised speaking most of his life. In support came Lord Buckmaster, also an ex-Lord Chancellor, Bishop Hicks of Lincoln, so liberal a mind, Gilbert Murray, soon to become the devoted advocate of the League of Nations, G. P. Gooch, unequalled in knowledge of modern history, Noel Buxton, unequalled in knowledge of eastern Europe, and H. W. Massingham of the *Nation*, unequalled as an editor. Lord Lansdowne, a small, dapper, elegant, long-nosed gentleman, with a

finely reserved manner, answered from carefully prepared notes, all too cautiously, and the war continued as before. The chances of peace, both then and in the previous year, were, as I thought, partly frustrated by the resolve of President Wilson to abandon his idea of being "too proud to fight," and of awaiting a "peace without victory" among the quarrelsome States of Europe. In April, 1917, with the singularly deceptive hope of "making the world safe for democracy," he had declared war, and in July of the same year American troops began gradually to dribble into France.

For my own part during those terrible months, I was reduced to the pitiable position of an inactive watcher from a distance, cut off from the natural alleviation of sharing in the daily movements and perils of the front. Owing to my prolonged absence in the Dardanelles and Salonika, my place among the few correspondents then authorised in France had, of course, been filled, and repeated attacks of violent illness might, in any case, have kept me at home. The melancholy of such constraint was increased by the death of many friends. In August, 1916, Richard Cross, our solicitor on the *Nation*, was drowned in the Lakes. In October, Philip Howell, Brigadier-General, was killed among the trenches in France; Hector Munro ("Saki") was killed there in the following month; Edward Thomas, in April, 1917; Alasdair Geddes, of the Flying Corps, the promising son of my friend Patrick Geddes, in the same month; news came in June of the death in Ceylon of Florence Farr, who possessed the finest voice for speaking to music, and one of the most poetic natures among women;<sup>1</sup> and in March, 1918, came the death of Scott Holland, who always traversed the mountains of our age with the feet of one who brings good tidings.<sup>2</sup> In the accounts of friends who came from the front on leave, there was little to cheer. For instance, dining with me on November 27th, 1916, Major

<sup>1</sup> See "Changes and Chances," pp. 194-195.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-47.

H. J. Gillespie, D.S.O., who had rejoined the Gunners at the outbreak of the war, and served throughout on the Ypres Salient, gave me a description from which I extract :

“ He said there was some hope of breaking the German line next spring ; for, though the Germans were entrenching behind, their lines were not so strong, and the men were not fighting so well, except in patches. In some places, 300 or 400 men will hold out with great courage, delaying our advance for four or five days ; but in others they come running in to surrender. He had known only one small party of our men—I think he said four—go over to be taken prisoner, in hopes of escaping the misery, and their leader, a sergeant, was shot on the way by our own men. He said that no one at the front regards the Boche as anything but a fine and brave fellow, suffering under orders like ourselves. None of their best divisions have been withdrawn, because they dare not weaken the line. Where there is no actual battle, as on the Salient lately, the men walk about openly without firing at each other. The mud and discomfort are indescribable. No carts can cross a newly occupied strip. Horses sink up to their necks, and guns bodily disappear. All supplies are carried up by hand from the A.S.C. dumps by the men in the regiment. He has never used his guns upon any visible object, but fires only by map. Men can now stand only three days in the firing line. They are often waist-deep in mud. Most of the trenches and dug-outs get washed away, and everyone lives wet. He said that at one time—I think in September—29,000 cavalry stood ready to rush through a broken line near Flers, and seize Bapaume, and he thinks they might have done it. He says all are dead sick of the war. He joined me in lamenting the death of ‘Saki,’ whom he once heard say of a man’s clothes that they were made more in Southwark than in anger.”

From such a picture, it was a relief, though a rare relief, to climb to William Yeats’s upper chamber in Woburn Buildings, and listen to discussions in which ignorance saved me the trouble of sharing. Such was a discussion on October 30th, 1916, of which I made the following brief record :

“ Sturge Moore and Miss Pye were there ; Ezra Pound and his wife (he singularly silent !) ; Chapelow, the Conscientious

Objector poet, now at large after much persecution ; and a few others, unknown to me. Yeats was in an interesting mood. He talked of his entrance into Spiritism after the Magic of former days. His attendant spirit is Leo Africanus, a man of the 16th century, who converses with him in Italian. Also the spirit of a policeman, Emerson, who drowned himself from Putney bridge in 1850, as Yeats discovered in the Somerset House records. Also the spirit of Luise Kirsch, a friend of Goethe, from whom (Goethe) he had messages. All this he appears to believe absolutely, and such belief must be highly consoling in these days.

" Then he talked of Freud and Jung and the Subconscious Self, applying the doctrine to art. He said the great thing is to reduce the Conscious Self to humility, as by the imitation of some ancient master, so leaving the Unconscious Self free to work. He said all reading of contemporaries and imitation of them was bad. The Self in poetry must be a dramatist, the poet being a spectator of life, and so must have a universal outlook and appeal. This I have always thought myself, though vaguely. There was some discussion also on *vers libres*, with sidelong shots at Ezra Pound. He then highly praised Pater's 'Marius,' which he had just re-read with intense admiration for its sentences and style. He traces English prose backwards only through Pater, Landor, and Sir Thomas Browne, but admitted some of Swift. On parting he gave me his book called 'Reveries.' "

Yes, in those terrible days, when the spirits of the newly slain seemed to be rushing thick through the air like arrows, it must have been consoling to meditate upon sentences and style, or to communicate with the soul of a bygone suicide or a feminine friend of Goethe. But, as usual, I was clamped tight to this ordinary world, writing every week a "middle" for Massingham's *Nation* ; helping Evelyn Sharp, so far as a man could, in her unremitting and almost ruinous labour upon *Votes for Women*, and speaking at public meetings up and down the country, chiefly upon the war and Suffrage. Two occasions of those speeches alone remain in memory. One was when we held a vast meeting in the Albert Hall to rejoice over the Russian Revolution of March, 1917, and that overthrow of the Tsardom which made us all so vainly

hopeful of freedom's future. George Lansbury was in the chair, and the chief speakers were Robert Smillie, at that time leader of the miners, Robert Williams, secretary of the Transport Workers, Israel Zangwill, man of genius, Maude Royden, and W. C. Anderson, each so enviable an orator. Clara Butt sang to perfection the Russian National Hymn to words of peace, and Edward Carpenter's "England, Arise!" by far the noblest song of Labour. I spoke at the beginning in honour of the heroes and martyrs of Russian freedom, many of whom I had personally known. And I believed I was among the first to introduce into England the Russian custom of calling upon the audience to rise and stand awhile in silence, remembering the sacrifice of those who had gone before, as officers in a mess rise silently to the toast of "Fallen Comrades." At all events, upon my suggestion, the whole audience rose, and for a few seconds there was silence.

On the other occasion (May 11th, 1917) I was again proud to be associated with W. C. Anderson, who invited me to speak to his constituents in Attercliffe, Sheffield. I spoke for fifty minutes to an enormous crowd in Montgomery Hall; I suppose about the war and the Dardanelles, but am not sure. For it was not my speech that mattered even to myself, but the sincere and conquering eloquence of Anderson, at that time chairman in the Executive of the Labour Party, a man of powerful personality and one of the finest among the Labour leaders, too soon to be lost at the very height of his powers, as was his wife, Mary Macarthur, a few years later on.

From Sheffield I naturally went south-west to see Edward Carpenter in his plain stone cottage, looking over its own field and garden at Millthorpe among the moors.

He was then seventy-three, active in body, as he still (1928) remains in mind. We walked together far over the hills, commanding the wide uplands of Derbyshire, and for a few days and evenings I enjoyed the converse of that singularly beautiful, imaginative, and concrete soul—an enjoyment



EDWARD CARPENTER IN HIS GARDEN AT MILLTHORPE.



heightened by the place itself, the sweet air, the roaring of thunder among the valleys, and all my innumerable and unconscious associations with mountain regions from childhood up. It was a time overwhelming in poignant delight.

But already I felt the touch of an illness, due, the doctors thought, to some lingering poison from Africa. On the afternoon of my return (May 14, 1917), I went to the Central Hall for what I suppose must have been among the first, perhaps the very first, of meetings for the League of Nations ; and certainly the League was finely ushered into this distracted world by Lord Bryce, General Smuts, Lord Buckmaster, Lord Hugh Cecil, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. During the next few days I had to speak myself—at G. P. Gooch's, in the Central Hall for Civil Liberties, and at Guildford, with Roger Fry in the chair. But the pain was almost intolerable, and so it continued for many weeks, only relieved in the evenings by the blessed powers of morphia, that true lotus of the world. In recollection of those evenings when hope of returning to ordinary life at last began, I wrote a few sentences, from which I may quote the following :

“ Every night I waited for it, torn by anguish such as I had supposed no human being could endure. And every night, at ten o'clock a lamp on the right of my hospital bed suddenly rose, and with a joy like a shipwrecked mariner's, I cried, ‘ A light on the starboard bow ! ’

“ Then a white figure came silently to the tossing bedside, and without a word I stretched my bare arm out. Between two fingers the white figure gathered up the softest part she could find, and with the other hand thrust a fine needle under the skin—a needle so fine that I hardly felt the prick of it as it pumped just one drop of brown liquid into my blood. A finger was passed gently over the place, the light went out, the white figure vanished, and, quietly as a ghost, I slid into paradise.

“ It was no paradise of the inane and shadowy dead, no monotonous Hades, estranged from mortal things. My heart beat quick with life, and throbbed with exultation. Courage and human affection filled my soul. I knew there

was no combination of murderous or governmental terrors of which I need be afraid ; and, though not much given to universal love, I could have clasped the whole race of mankind to my heart without affectation or absurdity. I perceived all the perplexities of the common world. I counted all its sorrows. I knew that the self-seeker whom I most abhorred was only mistaken in his purposes, and that the judge who hanged my friend was only the victim of the Law. Nothing appalled me ; nothing moved my hatred. Every night I designed a scheme by which at the same moment every evening, each inhabitant of the terraqueous globe should receive a similar inoculation, and having once learnt the supreme happiness of courage and of love, should never again return to wallow in the accustomed mire of our daily cowardice and savagery, but, in the service which is perfect freedom, should unite to build that gallant city hitherto unconjectured except by the maker and builder who is divine.

" Sometimes I moved upon a lower level, and my narrow bed became the familiar Balkan Peninsula, now beautiful, happy, full of glorious reminiscences, and requiring only some delightful rearrangement, in which no one would be assassinated, but Ferdinand, Tino, and Venizelos should smilingly combine for the common good. Sometimes the white sheets of my bed were converted into the snows of the Caucasus, and once more I made my home with Georgians in communities of anarchic innocence.

" A few effects of these political visions, it is true, were not so pleasant. For sometimes, under the influence of the drug, all my limbs but one would remain at peace, and that one would twitch and writhe and kick like a discontented province. Whereupon we who composed the majority of the limbs would sorrowfully protest, and finally discard it. We no longer counted it one of ourselves. We looked upon it as a noisy and troublesome patient in the next bed. We would gladly have laid it out for amputation upon the proper table. Yet it was my leg—my own right leg—not a thing to be flung away at random. It was my Ulster."

I suppose in these visions that incalculable monster, the Unconscious Self, was let loose from his subterranean prison, and roamed at large. But after three weeks of such varied experiences, I felt it was time to shut him up again, and I

threw away the key that had opened his iron cage. For I found that all day long I was merely anticipating the appearance of that white figure who would come at ten o'clock to mitigate my pain, and, foreseeing the drunkard's habit, I cut off the dope by one supreme effort. Little by little the atrocious disease began to subside. Lady Hamilton took me for drives round Hyde Park (my choice, for the pleasure of seeing mankind again), and finally to Holmwood beside Leith Hill, where, with unsurpassed kindness, the Pethick Lawrences received me into their beautiful house. I could not overestimate the compassionate assistance given me at that time by them and many others, some hardly known to me even by name. But such friendship was only a part of the large exhilaration which glorified the common world as life returned, shedding a young delight upon hayfields, woods, and sky.<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of that year (March 9th, 1917), I had been ordered to give evidence before the Dardanelles Commission, then sitting under the chairmanship of Lord Pickford, who, in his questions and understanding, appeared to me the very embodiment of all that makes a noble judge, and in the following month I began writing my large and detailed history, called "The Dardanelles Campaign." This involved prolonged labour and research, in which I was greatly assisted by Sir Ian Hamilton, General Birdwood, General Godley, Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, and other naval and military officers.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Winston Churchill also allowed me

<sup>1</sup> George Herbert, in the poem called "The Flower," has given expression to this joy in returning life, from a Christian's point of view :

" And now in age I bud again,  
After so many deaths I live and write ;  
I once more smell the dew and rain,  
And relish versing : O my only Light,  
It cannot be  
That I am he,  
On whom Thy tempests fell at night."

<sup>2</sup> The first edition was published in November, 1918, and the third in March, 1920, including several additions and corrections suggested to me by men who had taken part in the campaign.

to consult him one morning, and even to read the report of his evidence to the Commission before it was published. But in spite of all this courteous assistance, the toil of securing exact accuracy upon every point in so complicated and disputed an historic drama became so exacting that like the wearied old woman in the epitaph, I often vowed to "do nothing for ever and ever," if only the task were once completed. Fortunately, this too was a vow I have not been able to keep. The book sold well, though it had been anticipated by John Masefield's accurate, brilliant and poetic sketch called "*Gallipoli*," and it was most generously received by reviewers, especially by Masefield himself.

Even during the long months of labour upon that task, other interests and other necessary work took much of my time. Some of us were founding the "1917 Club," in commemoration of what appeared so splendid a hope arising among the Russian people. As an essayist I was doing my best for the *Nation* under Massingham, whose part in affairs was then particularly noble and unpopular. The prolonged struggle for Woman Suffrage never ceased, and was all the harder owing to the transference of many among its finest supporters to various departments in the war. These activities were often interrupted by the bombs of air-raids and the answering shells, as when the women's Lyceum Club gave some of us a ceremonial dinner, and our after-dinner speeches were enlivened by the explosion of big bombs just outside, in St. James's Park, but not a woman in the large audience stirred.<sup>1</sup>

The gloom of this restricted and inactive life was enlightened by fleeting acquaintance or more enduring friendship with many distinguished and even lovable people, such as were Robert Bridges, deservedly Poet Laureate, rugged and shaggy with powerful personality, savagely uttering

<sup>1</sup> It was the same air-raid that struck the offices of *John Bull* in Long acre, bringing the printing machinery crashing down upon the crowded refugees in the cellars, and killing many, among whom was Edward Henry Mosse, Vicar of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, as he stood in the doorway for encouragement and consolation.

strange theories of prosody from his lair on Boar's Hill, above Oxford, but to myself unexpectedly affable, perhaps because I never contradicted him, not even when he turned ferociously upon Tennyson, a predecessor in his own office, for having consciously written to please the inmates of Schools for Young Ladies. And about the same time, near Godalming, I met that thoughtful essayist, Clutton Brock, so charming, so kindly, so habitually spiritual in outlook that I felt his society was hardly the place for a journalist. And in the same month (October, 1917), my friend "Penguin" Evans, so learned in last century's literature, was succeeded as assistant editor on the *Nation* by H. M. Tomlinson, whom I had known before in various crises of events, but was now to know as one whose face, like a good-natured toad's, expressed the delightful admixture of cynicism, kindness, and humour familiar to all the world since he has taken over from Joseph Conrad a "corner" in descriptions of the sea and tropics dire. Then came John Buchan, whose genius sparkled in so many directions and who was generously helpful to me about the Dardanelles book, and, what was more gratifying still, to my son Richard, the painter; as was Lord Beaverbrook, who presided at the opening of Richard's second exhibition of war pictures (March 1st, 1918), and startled me by his knowledge of unpopular books, such as my own. And with them I may join "Bobbie" Ross, a man of singularly endearing nature, a true friend of myself as of so many, and a discerning art-critic, whose premature death (October, 1918) deprived Richard of an appreciation for a long time denied him by rival artists, art-critics, and academic professors in a narrow clique. One evening (February 15, 1918), at Sir Ian Hamilton's, I was able to meet Lord Hugh Cecil, and to listen to a strenuous but polite controversy between him and Massingham upon the question of peace in which each in turn displayed the characteristics of the traditional and the progressive mind. And, turning to another side of human attainment, I may recall Harold Samuel, the interpreter of Bach, and Ivor

James, the 'cellist, the latter of whom came down to delight the wives or widows of soldiers in a tiny club we made for them in Southwark.

Intercourse with such people, and continued association with former friends did, as I said, enlighten the gloom of those oppressive years, until at last (February 6th, 1918), a glory of happiness rose to dispel for a time even the darkness of the war. That night the Woman Suffrage Bill hung suspended between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, and the House of Commons was to be prorogued next day. In almost unendurable anxiety a few of us stood watching in the Outer Lobby as the messengers passed to and fro. Then we watched the tape in the National Liberal Club. At 8.45 the tiny hammer tapped out the syllables saying that the Royal Assent had been given by Commission. The struggle of so many years of sacrifice and bitter suffering was over. We gazed at each other in silence. Our joy was too overwhelming to find utterance, and in subsequent times of difficulty and depression I have always been able to cheer myself with the knowledge that nothing could ever happen to me now at once so difficult, so distasteful, so injurious, and so fertile in ridicule and obloquy as was the contest for Woman Suffrage. Yet it was won.<sup>1</sup>

For my supposed share in that victory (no man's share was to be compared with the sacrifice of scores among the women who fought for it)—for that small share and other reasons some 300 friends gathered in the Grafton Galleries on April 28th, 1918, to celebrate what I called my “apotheosis.” With exquisite grace and charm, the chair was taken by Elizabeth Robins, finest of Ibsen's actresses, and the imaginative writer who had dragged beauty from the cold darkness of the Arctic Circle. And there spoke Israel Zangwill, keen judge of literature; Edith Durham, so gallant, so humorous; and John Harris of the Anti-Slavery Society, recalling Angola and the Cocoa Islands. On

<sup>1</sup> For the whole Suffragette movement, see “More Changes More Chances,” pp. 304–339.

the military side fine letters were read from Sir Ian Hamilton, Sir Archibald Murray, and General David Henderson, my superior officer in Ladysmith, and for journalism a startling eulogy from St. Loe Strachey of the *Spectator*. My own editor, Massingham, was among the friendly audience. I answered the exaggerated but delicious praises and a presentation of £280, with a few remarks upon the pleasure of fighting always on the side of winning causes, and no doubt I ought to have died when the charming ceremony ended. But few select the right moment for death.

My next step was not into death but into Ireland, where the situation was indeed deadly. In the previous summer (July, 1917), Mr. Lloyd George had instituted in Dublin a Convention to frame a constitution for a United Ireland with a single Parliament within the Empire. He naturally wondered what Americans on coming into our war "for the freedom of small nationalities" would think of that small nationality under our control for centuries of misery. Sir Horace Plunkett, the far-seeing statesman and true servant of the Irish people, was chairman, and notable leaders of most parties worked their hardest. But Sinn Fein stood aloof, and Sinn Fein was the popular party, though different in nature from the Irreconcileables who have lately usurped the name (1926-1928). John Redmond had recently died, and John Dillon, almost the last of the Irish Parliamentary heroes in the Gladstonian age, had taken his place, when, after months of disputation, "Æ." (George Russell) resigned from the Convention, finding that Ulster's heavy foot stamped upon all reasonable terms which the Southern Unionists were willing to accept. A Majority Report was published in April, 1918, but another hope had gone, and any possible service the Convention might have accomplished was wrecked by Lloyd George's Act to extend conscription to a country whose long-sought Charter of Home Rule had been four years buried in the Statute Book, never to rise again.

The Irish Conscription Act laid the tombstone on Home

Rule, and, except as an epitaph, the words "Home Rule" have not since been heard. The Convention was thrown into a ditch, and Sinn Fein became the only cry. Indignation united nearly the whole Southern people. In Dublin I counted friends in every party and both "religions," but I found all were at one in wrath, their only difference being how best to resist. Most significant of all, even the Catholic Church through her bishops proclaimed that resistance was now justified, and violence was "not contrary to the Laws of God." Some people spoke of taking to the hills, some of combining in groups and fighting to the last, some of destroying the cattle and tearing up the crops lest they should go to feed the British tyrants. Others advocated a silent and passive resistance carried out by hundreds of thousands; and that, being "Æ.'s" counsel, was probably the wisest. He himself expressed the widespread indignation in a noble protest, which *The Times* refused to publish. It appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* (May 11th) :

"Our people," he wrote, in one paragraph, "look on this last act of British power with that dilated sense of horror a child might feel thinking of one who had committed some sin which was awful and unbelievable, against the Holy Ghost. What power, they wonder, except one inspired by spiritual wickedness, would weave this last evil for a land subdued, force it to warfare to uphold a power it hates, that has broken it, that has killed its noblest children, overthrown its laws, taken the sceptre? They turn in appeal to the Master of Life and supplicate Him, and they believe by conscience they are justified in resistance even to death."

It was indeed a time of tormenting anxiety. Rage, mingled with foreboding sorrow, inflamed all classes, and the reported words of even the finest natures among the English politicians only fanned the passion. It happened, for instance, that Lord Robert Cecil in a public speech of those days declared that "the Allies aimed at establishing the freedom and independence of the Jugo-Slavs, the Czecho-Slovaks," and other interesting but unfamiliar

races. Could it be merely through lapse of memory that he omitted the Irish race, so long familiar ? He went on to denounce the belief that " you can dragoon free nations into artificial unity and make them accept alien rulers." But whose was that belief ? Was it German ? Was it English ? Who in Ireland could decide ?

So I found all my conspicuous friends in Dublin united in opposition to the English Parliament's decree—Mrs. Green, "Æ.," James and John MacNeill, Tom Johnson, leader of the Labour Party, James Stephens, the leprechaun writer, Susan Mitchell, of Plunkett House, Gavan Duffy, Constantine Curran, our Dublin correspondent on the *Nation*, James Good, wisest of journalists, James Douglas, wisest of Quaker tradesmen, Diarmid Coffey and his beautiful young wife, so soon to die, John Eglington (Magee), the shrewd critic even of Ireland, Maud Gonne MacBride, loveliest of rebels, and Countess Markievicz, wildest and most beloved. James Bourchier was there, too, trying to accomplish for his own country what he had accomplished for Bulgaria. And then, perhaps for the first time personally, I met Arthur Griffith, leader of Sinn Fein, a man of no great personal distinction in appearance, but having an enormous influence upon Irish history as he proved. There, too, was Tim Healy, of the shrewd and biting word, speaking to me chiefly on the Irish indifference to death, and the fresh and unusual stir of political interest among Irish women. All of these, together with many more, such as Stephen Gwynn and Hugh Law, both moderate members of the Parliamentary Party in Westminster, agreed in opposition to the Conscription Act, though differing so widely in temperament and upon most subjects of public life.

Only John Dillon stood alone and dejected, like a buoy left stranded upon a harbour bank as the ebb-tide rushes past it. He was bitter against Sinn Fein and Arthur Griffith, though he said he rather liked De Valera personally. He thought the Sinn Fein movement exposed Ireland to another bloody massacre, ended all hope of conciliation, and

played into the hands of the British Government, as of all who looked for an occasion to wipe the Irish out. He actually thought General Henry Wilson had conceived a scheme for destroying all Irish leaders before another rising could happen. He said another violent rising would have happened already but for the restraint still exercised by the Church, though he and the bishops had great difficulty in finding a formula that could bind the headlong younger priests and not divide the opposition to Conscription by driving Sinn Fein out. He himself would certainly return to Westminster, but Sinn Fein had so split the Irish movement that there was now nothing to back the Nationalists, and the real distinction lay only between the hopeful conciliatory method and a defiant separatism, which might be very ideal and spiritual, but was hopeless of a future. His fine and melancholy face was touched with a deeper shade of sorrow as he observed how every Irish leader was always sure of being abused and distrusted. Such had been the fate even of Parnell himself, and, I reflected, Parnell in his wrath once called John Dillon a "melancholy humbug!"

Among all these characteristic Irish people I was received with a welcome such as may justly gladden the heart of any English visitor. It was that welcome of salutary frankness from which we English can easily learn why our country is hated throughout the world. Few of us now feel national conceit. We accept contempt or abuse with what Carlyle called a "godlike indifference," but it is difficult to remain divinely indifferent to hints at our national vulgarity and mental vacuum, insinuated with the delicacy of an old-fashioned hatpin probing the heart. Overwhelmed by my native humility, I could only gasp dumbly, like a fish on the sand, and sometimes I came away from the friendliest gatherings feeling like a man who has been most skilfully operated upon for a disease he never had. Yet, after being thus justly visited for the sins of my fathers, I was sure to return night after night, drawn by the enchantment of mixing with foreigners whose language I could readily

understand, and by whom I could be understood, if I spoke at all. Nowhere else could I listen to conversation so copious, so imaginative, so envenomed, so free from boredom and the wearisome trammels of accurate information.

Suddenly the tension broke. Lord French, as Lieutenant-Governor, issued a Proclamation speaking of "voluntary enlistment," and the hope of "securing a contribution of men without resort to compulsion." Lord French himself had been opposed to the Act from the first, but why the British Government stultified themselves by half-hearted attempts to enforce it, I was not sure. They had been drafting vast numbers of British soldiers, tanks, guns, and aeroplanes into Ireland, as though to crush out every opposition ; but perhaps at the last moment they doubted what effect another bloody massacre in Ireland might have upon America and the neutrals. Or, having about 130,000 Irishmen already fighting in the army, they doubted what might happen if they dragged in a lot of Irish conscripts, and whether it was worth while to deplete our forces in France just to stamp upon "the Sister Island." Besides, there was the food question. The threatened agricultural strike would deprive England and our army of a chief source of supply ; for the export of cattle, potatoes, and other food had more than doubled since the war, and Ireland was now supplying four-fifths of our total sustenance from abroad. Fortune's wheel had turned, and hungrily rationed English visitors like myself, contemplating the butchers' shops in Dublin, could realise for the first time the ecstasy of tigers gazing upon peaceful herds.

But the English Government had to save its face somehow. So it invented a plot—a man seen landing on the west coast, in imitation of Roger Casement. I was sleeping happily in the Shelbourne Hotel, hoping that the peril of conscription was overpassed, when at two in the morning came a knocking at my door, and I sprang up, fearing goodness knows what ! The porter's voice called out, rather too loudly, I thought, "There's a lady wants to see you, sir !" Reassured and

even hopeful, I hurried downstairs and found poor Mrs. Darrell Figgis standing at the door in extreme distress. Her husband had just been arrested and hurried away. I had known Darrell Figgis at various times—a man of something approaching genius, marred by a personal and mental vanity exaggerated beyond the vanity of most other men. What Mrs. Figgis expected of me, a mere journalist, I never discovered, for she could do nothing but repeat that her beloved husband had been carried off to the Castle, and a visit to the Castle gates by night was useless. Some sixty others, including Arthur Griffith and the Countess, had been arrested at the same time, and there was nothing more to be done. I was to meet poor Figgis several times again on his way to the terrible “empassioned” tragedy of his wife’s end, his lover’s end, and his own, but I have often thought how much better it would have been if he or his wife or his gaolers had selected the right moment for his death, which was that May night in 1918.

Next morning Gertrude Bannister Parry and I called on the Lord Mayor in the Mansion House, and found him cool, sensible, and sympathetic, but powerless to summon a meeting of protest, as we asked. The Conscription Act remained hanging over the country, and as late as October “Æ.” himself came over to London with Tom Johnson and James Douglas to reveal to the British Government the extreme danger of carrying it out, as Lord Northcliffe’s papers were still clamorously demanding. But just at that time events were moving too rapidly for talk of conscription in Ireland or anywhere else. The final crisis of the war had arrived, and with my usual good fortune, I was present at it.

In July, Robert Donald, who had been my friend on the *Daily Chronicle* ever since he became editor at the end of 1903, asked me with his usual courtesy (I think he was the most courteous editor I have known) to take Philip Gibbs’s place in France for a month. Gibbs, whom I had known on the *Chronicle* in earlier days, and again in the Balkan War of 1912, had won high distinction as a correspondent by per-



SOME WAR CORRESPONDENTS AND PRESS OFFICERS AT ROLLANCOURT, 1918  
Bottom Row (left to right): Sir Percy Robinson, Sir Percival Phillips, H. W. N.



sistently remaining on the French front and sending long despatches of sympathetic description, which deeply stirred the emotions of the millions who daily read them in the *Chronicle* or *Telegraph* (which shared with the *Chronicle*), and many American papers. He had deservedly made for himself a name almost universally known, but now he demanded one of his much needed intervals of rest, and the *Chronicle* and *Telegraph* chose me to take his place, though I was a much older man, and had, as I used to boast, been the first to instruct Gibbs in the essentials of military knowledge, such as the difference between a horse and a gun, between a company and an army corps, between a staff officer and a fool.<sup>1</sup> As it happened, my appointment involved an intolerable loss to Gibbs, for he missed just the month that marks one of the vital turning-points of history, and Donald refused to recall me till my appointed time was up.

So after two years' absence I found myself near to a front of war again, but for a correspondent how great was the difference! In old days half one's time, or more than half, was spent in finding food and shelter for one's horses, men, and self. Provisions, cover, and transport absorbed an amount of energy and thought which the editors and our readers fondly supposed was devoted to witnessing battles, writing glorious despatches, and galloping with them, revolver in hand, to a distant telegraph station. After the needs of life had somehow been scraped together, one had to see or discover or conjecture events and news which it was the first object of the General Staff and other officers to conceal or falsify. Then began a hopeless search for the Censor, who was ashamed of his job and made it his first object to hide away, and his second to reject everything one had written. But now I was welcomed into the stately Château of Rollancourt, near Hesdin—stately in front, but having little more inside than a knife-blade. Copious food was provided three times a day, not to speak of afternoon tea! I had a real bedroom all to myself, and servants to

<sup>1</sup> See "More Changes More Chances," p. 380.

make the bed, wash up, and cook. Every evening I need only tell my officer where I wanted to go next day, and at dawn a motor would be snorting at the gate, ready for both of us. When I had driven out, and seen or heard what I could in the time, I returned to the château at about 1.30, and met the other correspondents (there were only five or six of us). Each told where he had been and what he had seen or heard. Knowledge was equally pooled. There was no rivalry, no "scooping." After lunch all retired to write composite despatches, the only chance of personal distinction being the "style," that is, the way of looking at things, and the proportion kept. By 3.30 our own Press Officers, acting as Censors and living in the château, had read and approved or disapproved. They handed the messages to the despatch-rider, waiting at the door with his motor-cycle, and the thing was done. All had been organised and paid for by the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, and the strain of a war-correspondent's life was relaxed till it almost ceased. Sometimes I rode out in the afternoon, especially to the corn-growing field of Agincourt, with its little church that may possibly have witnessed a conflict forgotten but for Shakespeare ; and sometimes we all went to hear the future plans for Rawlinson's or some other General's army.

I was equally fortunate in my officers and my colleagues. Perry Robinson, a Westminster boy, who had been at Christ Church with me, and had served many years in the United States, was for *The Times* and *Daily News* combined—a combination displeasing to his strongly conservative nature, but the leading London papers had been wisely linked together according to their differences in politics. Then there was Beach-Thomas, a Shrewsbury boy like myself, and also from Christ Church, for the *Daily Mail* and some second paper, I forget which. And Percival Phillips was there for the *Express* and another, American by birth and education, my colleague in Barcelona, the Balkan War, and other places, a scientific and detached observer of war as an art, carefully studying the intention of each movement,

and in the leisure of winter months gradually composing an elaborate "contour map" of the whole front with slips of cardboard to show the relative heights and valleys of that undulating region. And there was Herbert Russell, of Reuter's, a Dorset and Devon man, with wide knowledge of the sea, but tied to Headquarters by his special work now that he was on land. That excellent writer Prevost Battersby, my colleague in the South African War and elsewhere, was serving Reuter with the Americans further south, and two correspondents for American papers were with us at Rollancourt. I think those were all.

Our Press Officers or Censors were also exceptionally fine. All of us stood under the command of Colonel Neville Lytton, brother of Lord Lytton, afterwards Governor of Bengal, and of Lady Constance Lytton, one of the most distinguished and heroic of the Suffragettes.<sup>1</sup> He was by nature and training an artist, and his life in Paris gave him the inestimable advantage of speaking real French. Like all the other Press Officers he had been severely wounded before he became seconded to this post. Under him stood Captain Cadge, a Norfolk solicitor by birth and training, but now an indefatigable organiser on our behalf, always calm, always ready, always at work. I have often wondered why various titles of honour were offered to us correspondents after the war, but no notice was taken of a man like that, whose service was far greater than ours. Two others, Captain De La Bere and Captain Partridge, had been in the Regular Cavalry before the war, and like the rest badly wounded in France.

But most welcome to me of all was C. E. Montague, whom I had known by name, though perhaps not personally, when for many years he had served on the leader-writing staff of the *Manchester Guardian*, and was the dramatic critic as well. In that height of our profession, he was so much moved by the invasion of Belgium at the beginning of

<sup>1</sup> See "More Changes More Chances," p. 305. And read Neville Lytton's book "The Press and the General Staff" (1920).

the war that he dyed his white hair, and, with a splendid lie, enlisted as a private in the "Sportsman's Battalion," for he was a famous mountaineer. We have all heard of men whose dark hair through fear turned white in a single night, but Montague is the only man I know whose white hair in a single night turned dark through courage. In spite of a terrible wound during bomb-practice, he seemed to me a man of unshrinking nerves, never hesitating at a point of danger, and never revealing the fear that all men feel but some can hide. His eye for country, especially for the course of water-sheds, was unerring, and in consequence it was always a special pleasure to me when it was his turn to accompany me as my Press Officer ; for the lie of country is to me of peculiar interest. But still more I delighted in his amazing knowledge of literature, above all of Shakespeare. He recognised the smallest reference, and exact quotations flowed from him so copiously that he had to dam them up by gallant self-restraint, though I could often watch the quotation sticking in his throat. Through an unexpected quality of mind, he disliked taking responsibility. He was, indeed, almost painfully modest, or perhaps he felt he was under superior orders as in the *Guardian* office at home, and rather liked it. At all events he left most of the organising business to Cadge, never gave advice or made suggestions as to where I ought to go next morning, rarely talked at mess, and never entered into a dispute, except once, when one of us insulted Ireland. Then indeed his blue eyes glared a deeper blue, and he seemed to tear the wretched victim to pieces and spread him on the floor. Next minute he turned to me with a quiet apology. " You see," he said, " I've suffered this a long time."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. E. Montague's books are well known. My favourites are the merry tale of journalism, "A Hind let Loose," "The Right Place," showing that "eye for country," and, for the war, "Rough Justice," "Dis-enchantment" (the finest criticism written on the war), and some of the scenes in "Fiery Particles." After his retirement from the *Manchester Guardian* early in 1926, this incomparable man lived in a beautiful old farmhouse at Burford in Oxfordshire, but died on Whit-Sunday, May 26, 1928, in Manchester, aged 61.

So that, for me personally, it was a happy interval. Every morning I was able to visit some point on the front between the Ypres Salient and the high ridge dividing the Ancre from the Somme, west of Amiens. Some of those places, which war has made famous haunts for pilgrims, I had known four years before, and now found changed and fallen, ground into rubble, undiscoverable but for notice-boards announcing their names. Others I came to know for the first time—Vimy, St. Eloi, Arras, Albert, and the valley of the Ancre. And, by way of reviving old memories of beauty, I would sometimes be swept round by the west fronts of Amiens and Abbeville, or past the overloaded decoration of St. Riquier. One day I had to take my turn in following the King on a visit to Poperinghe and Plumer's famous Second Army.

Next day (August 7th) we were summoned to Rawlinson's Headquarters at Flixecourt, and had the situation and the morrow's intentions explained by General Montgomery and General Vivian. By order of Foch, now in supreme command, Mangin's army had strongly counter-attacked Ludendorff's attempted thrust around Château-Thierry nearly three weeks before (July 18th), and now Rawlinson's IVth Army was to co-operate by clearing the perilous front that threatened Amiens. At two o'clock next morning Montague, Beach-Thomas, and I started from Rollancourt in the dark, and passing through Doullens, reached the long high ridge that rises from the fine but shattered church of Corbie, about seven miles east of Amiens, and between the Ancre and Somme stretches to Bray, and thence to Peronne. On the south side, beyond the Somme and all its reedy pools, it overlooks the once fertile undulating plain of Santerre, marked by the well-known names of Villers-Bretonneux, Hamel, Rosières, Chaulne, and Roye, down as far as Montdidier, where the French line began.

By the time we had climbed to the top of the ridge it was getting light, but a white mist, as of autumn, veiled the whole country and prevented any clear view of the plain, over

which the guns kept up a ceaseless booming. Montague walked with me a mile or two along the ridge until we reached a point known as "Welcome Wood," where we had come under shell-fire only a day or two before. All was now quiet there, but the mist did not lift. It was bitterly disappointing, for, without any scientific reasoning, I felt assured that this August 8th was the turning point of all the war. That vague hope was strengthened when large bodies of men came marching in order towards us down the road. They were German prisoners, whole companies of them, and though Germans had been captured by thousands before, I greeted these as evidences of victory, though without reason, and I was right. On that misty ridge, from which I could but dimly discern dark lines of what appeared to be infantry, interspersed with larger objects that might be tanks or guns, I was present at the cardinal point of what Ludendorff has called his "Black Day." But long before the sun could clear the view, we were obliged to hurry back to compose the joint telegrams of hope.

On the following days, starting many hours before dawn, I walked over the hideous scene of battle just south of the Somme, finding it thickly strewn with the dead of both armies and many evidences of the Germans' hurried retreat—guns abandoned, kit and pathetic letters from home left in the dug-outs along the river bank. But here and there gallant parties of the enemy remained as rearguard, and in trying to cross the Somme by a rickety bridge to the shattered village of Chipilly, I was met by rapid rifle-fire, which would probably have killed some of our party if we had gone in a bunch. But, happily, I went alone, and, once more to parody the Greek historian, an easier thing to hit is many men than one man, difficult, if moving, very.

On another day, it being Saturday and the correspondent's holiday (it was August 10th), Cadge and I were able to reach points much further off, and, when in Le Quesnoy beside the long straight road from Amiens to Roye, we came under heavy fire from field guns and aeroplanes, so that something

struck me on the head just as I was drawing a rough plan of the road in front. For at the moment my attention was fixed upon a large body of our cavalry, including several of the 3rd Dragoon Guards, who came trotting happily past us along the road, and then extended to open order across the open ground on both sides. I suppose the intention was to capture by assault the small town of Roye, lying about three miles in front beyond a low ridge that concealed it. As might have been expected even by a civilian, they found the apparently open ground thickly scarred with deep trenches and crossed by wire entanglements, utterly impassable for cavalry, or for anything else, except perhaps tanks. The men began closing up to a centre on the road, and when formed there under shell-fire, I suppose they received the order to charge ; for perhaps the commanding officer remembered Balaclava. Along that straight and open road they charged at full gallop. At the top of the rising ground, one saw dark and thickish little woods, called the Bois-en-Zed from their shape, one on each side of the road. As our cavalry drew nearer and nearer, a raging storm of machine-gun and rifle-fire came shrieking upon them from those two woods, and they melted away. Two days later, following the Canadians' front line, I was able to advance almost up to the woods ; and just one week after the charge I could enter them and look down the reverse slope to Roye, which was being heavily bombarded. But along that straight road, on both sides and in the centre, the corpses of our men and horses lay thick, blackening and rotting where they fell.

As the enemy gradually retired, our head-quarters were moved from Rollancourt to the older and more substantial château of Vaticelles, within easy walking distance of St. Wulfran's great but unfinished church at Abbeville, and the deep river running between ancient walls. And just a week after that turning-point of the war on August 8th, I was able to attend the thanksgiving service at Amiens for the preservation of the cathedral, and no Frenchman present

could have been more thankful than I, to whom the building had long been so familiar that even under the protective sacking which covered the porches I could imagine each of the sculptured Biblical figures and scenes.

So the long days went past, and on each I was able to accompany one part or other of our victorious line as it advanced. Two days especially remain illumined in my memory. One was August 24th, when I went with Montague to the site of Mesnil, a village steeply overhanging the valley of the Ancre, opposite the ill-omened heights of Thiepval. We made our way down through the bare sticks of what was once a wood, but was now strewn with appalling fragments of man, and Montague looked at me sideways now and then to see if I noticed them. I did notice them, but there was nothing left to say. So we came to the edge of the flooded Ancre and its marshes, across which we balanced our way upon a few boards. It was doubtful how far we should proceed up the opposite slopes just south of Thiepval Wood ; for the Germans, though evidently retreating, still held the top of the long ridges. But, pointing to the base of a shattered windmill and the ruins of a few huts at the summit, Montague said, "That's Pozières," and I knew Pozières had stood on the famous road from Albert to Bapaume, close neighbour to terrible Contalmaison. It was impossible to turn back. Up the deserted grass we climbed from point to point till we saw British soldiers swarming out from Thiepval wood on our left, and suddenly small "pockets" of Germans appeared, rising from pits and shallow ravines in our front. A New Zealander, having a revolver but no cartridges, had just joined us, and so we called upon the advancing enemy to surrender. This they did very willingly, poor fellows, holding up their hands, and at our command throwing away their rifles. Montague and I formed a little batch of seven into marching order, and conducted them back down the slope and across the river again. Conversing with them on the way, I found that three were still under nineteen ; one was a good Socialist



*Schmidt, Manchester*

C. E. MONTAGUE



all were dead sick of the war, all intelligent and quite good-tempered. One told me regretfully that his mother had a nice little house near Frankfurt-on-Oder, and always kept a good bed with clean sheets ready waiting for him, but here he had been for months coated in mud, sleeping in filth among rats, and covered with lice. It was the simple lamentation of millions on both sides. After looking at me rather curiously, he asked if it was usual for British officers to go into battle unarmed, and I had to shuffle the answer, conveying the impression, I fear, that British officers were too courageous to depend upon mere weapons. Handing our capture over to the authorities at Mesnil, Montague and I then proceeded down stream to the piteous ruins of Albert, where shells were still throwing up clouds of dust from crashing masonry.

My other day was on the 26th, when I went with Neville Lytton through Doullens and Beaumetz to Boyelles, about half-way between Arras and Bapaume, whence we crossed the ruined railway and road into a high grass country with wide depressions and ridges. Lytton had to stop on the summit of the highest ridge, being still lame from a wound, but I went on, wishing to look over a distant crest which I knew must conceal the little town of Croisilles. Unhappily, the Germans still held the town, having resisted two attacks of a Middlesex regiment, and in a shallow trench near the top of the crest I found a thin line of the Middlesex under command of a major, who told me he had already lost two hundred men. The survivors were being horribly harassed by shells and the hissing rain of machine-guns, which is, I think, the most terrifying means of death ; for it is aimed, and yet it scatters. Having discovered that I was not a correspondent who had worked his men up to murderous rage by making out that they thoroughly enjoyed the war, and especially going "over the top," the major kindly led me back under this disagreeable fire to have a drink in the officers' shelter, and I then returned to Lytton across the breezy upland, unpleasantly pursued with various forms of

deadly missiles all the way. It was to be my last experience of serious danger in open and international war.

That evening Philip Gibbs came back, naturally enraged at having missed all the eventful month, and reluctantly I had to make my way home, only cheered by the delightful companionship of Aubrey Herbert, who was coming from some wild mission to Albania. History moved swiftly then. Bulgaria collapsed, Turkey and Austria sued for peace. Lord Milner told the *Evening Standard* that we had better make peace while there was someone to make it with. President Wilson proposed his promising terms, and, going to the Russian Ballet at the Coliseum on October 12th, I saw suddenly displayed on the screen the words, "Germany has accepted President Wilson's terms and will begin evacuation." The audience rose and cheered without stopping, but a woman near me remarked, "I'm not blood-thirsty, but I'm disappointed." The announcement was, in fact, premature, and many in the country shared that woman's sentiment—many who, like a poet in the *Cambridge Magazine*, were heard lamenting :

"*They are taking away My War !*

*Now, just as it was becoming most beautiful to me and precious.*

*It cannot end now ! It is not finished !*"

Think what a sad deprivation peace must always bring to those who spend their time shifting about little flags on maps and expounding strategy to aged members of the Clubs ; or who pile up in banks the rich harvest of death ; or love to parade Parliament Street in martial garb ! And then there were all the thousands of men and women who for years had toiled in munition sheds, engineer shops, or aeroplane factories, earning wages that for the first time in their lives gave them plenty to eat, and even intervals of pleasure. "They are taking away Our War !" so many cried, but in spite of protests it was taken away.

Early in November, since my book on the Dardanelles Campaign was at last published, I was able to return as an

addition to the small body of our correspondents in France. The War Office sent me out at the special request of those correspondents and their Press Officers. "*Laudari a laudatis*"—there is no finer compliment, and only once have I enjoyed that compliment in a higher degree. So back to France I went, accompanied by a lively and imaginative young journalist, Cecil Roberts, whose stay with us was, unfortunately, brief. I found that our quarters had now been advanced to Lille, where the Vauban fortifications would have filled Uncle Toby with ecstasy. Next day (November 9th), I drove out through Le Quesnoy, which had just been occupied by New Zealanders, to the old fortress of Maubeuge, through which the Sambre rushes to the Meuse, and where shells were still occasionally falling. Then, after a service of thanksgiving in the fine cathedral of Tournai, which the Fifth Army occupied the day before —then came the long-expected hour.

It was Monday, November 11th, and I was determined to reach Mons, though it was said to be impossible. Montague was my guide, and we took the safest route, driving south-east along the solid roads, instead of attempting the direct way through the marshes. At Orchies we heard the Armistice had been signed, to begin at eleven, and that troops were to remain in position, without communication with the enemy. Was it possible to reach Mons by eleven? We rushed through a forest to the deserted city of Valenciennes, and turning sharp left followed the canal, scene of heroic disaster four years before. We met no "Angels" on the road, but swarms of returning refugees, and the population of that laborious region thickly lined the way, cheering and shouting and weeping for joy at sight of us. Indeed, if we English were not trained from the cradle to suppress all signs of emotion, I might have shouted and wept myself. But my journalist mind was concentrated on the question: could we force our way through the crowds in time?

At last we reached the thin woods or public gardens of a suburb, in which the bodies of some Germans were lying

about, unlucky men killed a few hours before peace could save them. Swinging sharply again to the left, we ran right into Mons itself, and drew up in the beautiful old market-place before the town hall. The 7th brigade of the 3rd Canadian Division stood formed up in the square, together with a squadron of the 5th Lancers (Irish). An aeroplane dropped brilliant white stars overhead. Brigadier-General Clark, in command of the Canadians, read the terms of the Armistice, and called for cheers for King Albert. The English and Belgian National Anthems were played. Even the town-hall chimes attempted "God save the King," and "Tipperary," and all the people shouted and sang. One seldom sees such joy, and this was in Mons.

The struggle back to Lille was very severe, and I reached it only just in time to send off a brief telegram by the despatch-rider. I foolishly thought the mere account of such a ceremony—such an historic event in such a place—an account that could be sent by no other correspondent, and which I had laboured with such excitement to get, and under the guidance of a man equally excited with myself—I foolishly thought that my editors would be pleased to have it. But they were not pleased. They expected columns of slush, and so they had a right to be disappointed, for they did not get them. To myself their telegraphed reproaches were also bitter disappointments, but such bitterness is too common in a journalist's life to poison one's nature long. I ought to have realised earlier in my career that a war-correspondent is best appreciated if he hangs about behind the lines and telegraphs "gup" and "sob-stuff." But for myself the harsh and salutary lesson now came too late.

The remainder of my duties in France and Belgium consisted chiefly in listening to hurrahs and receiving embraces, of which I won by far the biggest share upon entering Ghent like him who brought the citizens good news ; for I was the first Englishman to appear there in uniform (November 12th). Then I had to visit Bruges, and to see the King and Queen of the Belgians enter beside the great river of Antwerp,

and stand before their liberated people in the beautiful gilded square of Brussels. Waterloo, Namur, Huy, Louvain, Liége followed in quick succession, and at the last-named city I saw a wretched woman having her hair cut off in the market-place on the charge of giving her favours to Germans while they were in possession. It reminded me of "*Boule de Suif.*" She shrieked and struggled and escaped, little knowing how soon short hair would be in fashion. At Spa, scene of the Kaiser's abdication and flight, just when he might have donned his white uniform and walked up and down the trenches till a bullet found him, we saw burlesque representations of His Majesty hanging from trees and across the roads. On December 1st, Beach-Thomas, Cecil Roberts and I waited at the frontier bridge near Malmédy (then German) until the trumpet sounded for the 4th Dragoon Guards and a Lancer Regiment to advance as vanguard to the 1st Cavalry Division. Crossing at once, we were the first to enter German territory, and ran quickly onward into the little town, where the population was chiefly in church, listening to a fine exhortation to peaceful behaviour, delivered in French. I called on the Landrath, Freiherr von Korff, who, mistaking me for the General, began to appeal for his people, fearing that one among them might accidentally cause a bomb or rifle to go off, and our men would take vengeance. I was able to reassure him, and in fact our cavalry were already passing in perfect order through the town, the people standing aloof but watching them with interest, and thanking heaven we were not French or Belgians. Next day and night we held great revelry in the frontier town of Verviers, all the people dancing in long strings, hand to hand with our men up and down the steep roads, as though they could never stop. And so I came again to Charlemagne's great church at Aix, and then, at Cologne, to the Rhine itself (December 5th) on the banks of which I was to remain for two full months.

On the 16th Haig had all the correspondents gathered at the entrance to the great Kaiser Bridge over the Rhine,

and delivered us a little speech in the best halting English manner, but, in the best English manner also, he inserted at the end the duty of concluding a fair and honourable peace without thought of vengeance. He then presented each of us with a tiny Union Jack attached to a stick of firewood, so that we withdrew proud as school children after a feast. All the other correspondents went home that day, but Montague remained till Christmas Eve, and about this time Lacon Watson appeared for Reuter's, always so genial, so sensible, and such a model of moderation and freedom from perilous zeal. A few other correspondents drifted to and fro. Ward Price came too for the *Daily Mail*, and at the request of officers in the cavalry barracks across the river, we two exercised their horses, riding far out into the beautiful forests around Bensberg.<sup>1</sup>

My editors asked me to stay on owing to the disturbed state of the country, and the divergent accounts of the Rhineland. No wonder Germany was disturbed. After centuries of closely concentrated government from above, first by petty Kings and Grand Dukes, and for the last forty-eight years by the Kaiser and his Ministers in Berlin, all bonds of allegiance and law were suddenly broken, and an unusually orderly people, accustomed to obey without hesitation, found themselves loose and undirected as sheep without a dog. Ignorant of self-government in practice, they turned to the region of theories and ideas, upon which the German nature browses most freely. Endless discussions as to the best form of Constitution were held in halls and beer-houses, and listening hour after hour, I learnt something of the infinite varieties of Socialism. As is usual in such discussions, the main division lay between the Majority or Moderate Socialists, upholding such government as remained in Berlin, and the "Independents," very nearly identified with the Left Wing which took the name of "Spartacus"

<sup>1</sup> It was on one of these rides that I came unawares upon an old wooden inn bearing a record of Goethe's presence there in 1774, and at once war, British Army, and all vanished from my mind, and I was back in the age of Werther. See "Changes and Chances," p. 59.

from the leader of the Roman gladiators and slaves in revolt (73-72 B.C.). The presence of the Allied armies held these divisions within the bounds of verbal debate, but in Berlin a Spartacist rising led to the atrocious murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht by the Government police, and there was much disturbance even in Düsseldorf and the great coal and iron districts of the Ruhr. I myself could not penetrate in that direction beyond the steel town of Solingen, as we were not allowed across the Lines of Occupation. But danger to the country as a whole was also threatened by a section of the well-to-do citizens who aimed at a Rhineland Republic, and were much encouraged by the French, especially by General Mangin, upon whom I called in his headquarters at Mainz. He declared that the population in all that region were only longing to be united to France, and so he was preparing the way for that "Separatist" movement which was afterwards to give so much trouble to Germany and ourselves.

The condition of the German people was indeed deplorable enough to promote revolution, if any revolution could have supplied livelihood. It is true that orders were received from England by certain of the correspondents to represent Germans as being fat and prosperous, and as ordered the information was supplied.<sup>1</sup> But the facts were the reverse. German wives and mothers had patched and cleaned the clothes till hardly any of the originals was left, and the long

<sup>1</sup> "We had not been long in Cologne when there arrived in hot haste a young pressman from London. He looked a fine strong man. He seemed to be one of the male Vestals who have it for their trade to feed the eternal flame of hatred between nations, instead of cleaning out stables or doing some other work fit for a male. His train had fortunately brought him just in time for luncheon. This he ate and drank with goodwill, complaining only that the wine, which seemed to me good, was not better. He than slept on his bed till tea-time. Reanimated with tea, he said genially, 'Well I must be getting on with my mission of hate,' and retired to his room to write a vivacious account of the wealth and luxury of Cologne, the guzzling in all cafés and restaurants, the fair round bellies of all the working class, the sleek and rosy children of the poor. I read it, two days after, in his paper." "Disenchantment," by C. E. Montague, p. 176. 1st edition.

rusty overcoats worn by men and women covered little. The virulent epidemic of influenza that fell upon most of Europe that autumn had killed vast numbers, and left the remainder weak and hopeless. Food of all kinds was scarce and becoming scarcer owing to the British blockade, which was shamefully prolonged for nine months after the Armistice. Among the working classes the condition of the children was hideous. Professor Siegert, in charge of the Children's Hospital in Lindenburg, a south-west suburb of Cologne, took me several times over the wards and showed me rows of infants dying of starvation. They had no weight, no growth, no sense. Their limbs were thin as sticks, but shapeless and boneless. The mothers had no milk, the French had requisitioned vast numbers of the cows, and those that remained gave unwholesome milk. Even where milk could be found, the babies could not drink it, as there was no rubber for the teats of the bottles, and they could not suck the substitutes of glass or bone.<sup>1</sup> I found the same conditions of starvation and misery as I went from house to house and story to story in the working streets of the city. The same again in Solingen and Crefeld, when I visited them and consulted the Burgermeisters and the town doctors. The British blockade was killing more Germans than our guns had killed throughout the war. And on the top of starvation lay the influenza, acting upon a population long exhausted by hardship and reduced in vitality by a potato diet. General Clive, who held command of Cologne, generously supported the famous Burgermeister, Dr. Adenauer, in his efforts at alleviation, but while the blockade lasted there was little to be done, and the people, especially the children, continued to die.

For a long time past the rations had been insufficient to support life at full energy, and painful scarcity had lasted over two years. Potatoes, bread, meat, and margarine

<sup>1</sup> English women finely responded to my report on this point by sending hundreds and thousands of rubber teats to be distributed in Cologne and other German cities

(made from the bones of slaughtered beasts) had run short. Rations, as Dr. Krautwig, a leading physician, told the City Council of Cologne early in February, 1919, were "just too much for death and not enough for life." There was no milk for anyone over three, and only half a pint, and that bad, for babies. No butter, no lard, no cheese, no fish. But a few profiteers, feeding like ghouls, or like the profiteers in England, upon the blood of their country, had scraped fortunes together, and could afford the prices charged in big restaurants, where an ordinary lunch without wine cost fifty marks a head. These were the people, I suppose, to whom a correspondent referred when he wrote that the population was "exuding fat." For the rest, when I wondered how calmly the conquered received the invading armies, the Burgermeister replied, "We are too exhausted even to hate."

The official report made by our Military Authorities in the occupied area said: "The supply from the rest of Germany allows no reserve, nor are the rations adequate for proper nourishment. Infant mortality has greatly increased, and the population has been so weakened that working hours have to be reduced. The poor are suffering severely." Still more permanently disastrous than the food shortage was the stoppage of work owing to the blockade and to the terms of the Armistice forbidding export of goods across the frontiers of the occupied territories, which included many of the industrial centres. Hunger and want of work—those are the chief material causes of human misery, and it was evidently the desire of the victorious Allies to reduce Central Europe to a desert of ruin inhabited by skeletons, such as Germany was at the end of the Thirty Years' War. I do not believe that the great majority of the English people contemplated with pleasure a massacre of the innocent, or even of the guilty. Yet, mainly owing to our blockade, that was the result approaching. And Clause XXVI in the terms of the Armistice, trusting to which Germany had surrendered, laid it down: "The Allies and United States

contemplate the provisioning of Germany during the armistice as shall be found necessary." "What is necessary?" said the jesting Allies, and waited not for an answer.

"*Wir müssen viel umlernen,*" was then the motto of the Germans, always so docile a people. They had indeed to change their aspect and unlearn much, and one of their lessons was never again to put trust in the tender mercies of their enemies. But as to the kindness, the humour, and the generous behaviour of the British soldiers themselves within the limits of our occupation, no praise could be excessive. Naturally they were delighted with the change from the trenches in France to the cleanliness and order of their German quarters. They did not exactly fraternise with the people, but often they said to me, "We take to these Huns. They're more like us!"

To reveal the truth of these conditions was my main work during the early weeks of 1919, but the loneliness after Montague departed made me long for recall. Impatience at monotony, and unwillingness to suffer the extreme hardship of unoccupied waiting have always been my besetting sins as a correspondent. But the tedium was relieved by the appearance of William Rothenstein, the painter, at Beethoven's Bonn, so short a distance up the river, and by opportunities of trying (quite in vain) to appreciate the formlessness of modern music. Once also I drove far over the stormy mountains of the Eiffel to the beautiful city of Luxemburg, which I found in a state of peaceful revolution (January 10). For, under French influence, the Grand Duchess Marie Adelheid had just been compelled to abdicate, for the crime of having entertained the Kaiser at the beginning of the war—a crime which she could hardly have refused to commit.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE BURDEN OF IRELAND

*"I ever thought it the most uncontrolled and universally agreed maxim, that freedom consists in a people being governed by laws made with their own consent; and slavery in the contrary."*

*"It is a known story of the dumb boy, whose tongue forced a passage for speech by the horror of seeing a dagger at his father's throat. This may lessen the wonder that a tradesman hid in privacy and silence should cry out when the life and being of his political mother are attempted before his face, and by so infamous a hand."*

SWIFT'S "Drapier's Letters," VI.

*"A conquered nation is like a man with a cancer: he can think of nothing else, and is forced to place himself, to the exclusion of all better company, in the hands of quacks who profess to treat or cure cancer."*

*"English rule is such an intolerable abomination that no other subject can reach the people. Nationalism stands between Ireland and the light of the world. Nobody in Ireland of any intelligence likes Nationalism any more than a man with a broken arm likes having it set. A healthy nation is as unconscious of its nationality as a healthy man of his bones. But if you break a nation's nationality it will think of nothing else but getting it set again. It will listen to no reformer, to no philosopher, to no preacher, until the demand of the Nationalist is granted. It will attend to no business, however vital, except the business of unification and liberation."*

Preface for Politicians; "John Bull's Other Island," by BERNARD SHAW.

AFTER returning from Cologne in February, I was kept in London for the greater part of 1919, the distractions of London being mitigated only by brief commissions to Ireland and Denmark. In London an Englishman may enjoy a certain amplitude of life, and I have found it the only place where I can fully understand what people mean. The cheerful irony of the London working classes is to me a natural speech, and the open-hearted or sceptical tolerance of the educated people accepts almost anyone who can touch without boredom upon sport, politics, and even literature. But "distraction" is a mild word for the price the Londoner pays. Writing of Edward

Irving's death, Carlyle said : " Scotland sent him forth a Herculean man ; our mad Babylon wore him and wasted him, with all her engines ; and it took her twelve years."<sup>1</sup> The engines of London were set to wear and waste us very savagely in that year, 1919, and perhaps our fond expectation of a peaceful existence after the war made our spirits the more sensitive to their teeth.

For myself, I continued to write regularly every week for the *Nation* under Massingham, usually " middles " (essays upon some definite subject of current or permanent interest), but sometimes " leaders," and occasionally signed descriptive articles, when I could speak with the assurance of personal knowledge. I still felt aggrieved that my editor refused to allow me to sign the " middles." The roundabout ways of saying " I," such as " we " or " the present writer," always annoy me in essays that are essentially personal ; and if I happened to write a " middle " upon some subject that concerned me intimately, I should have liked readers to know who wrote it ; besides, my future position in the trade had to be considered. For outside the *Nation* office my name was likely to remain entirely unknown, as it remained. But Massingham's refusal continued firm. His thoughts were rightly fixed on the paper's advantage, and he believed that ordinary readers, knowing nothing about newspapers, would credit him with a large and varied staff, whereas in reality his regular staff numbered three, or at most four—Brailsford, Tomlinson, and myself, though Hammond, J. A. Hobson, and Masterman often came in, with enviable power, but not with weekly regularity. I still think he was wrong, for a " middle," unlike a " leader," must have a private and personal tone. But my judgment may be perverted by disappointed vanity which is the same as vexation of spirit. For though my " stuff " was sometimes praised by such model critics as Lord Morley, Mr. Asquith, and Mr. Birrell, all the readers remained ignorant of my existence.

<sup>1</sup> Essay on " The Death of Edward Irving," 1835.

No matter for that. Under such an editor, at all events, there was not much chance of peaceful meditation, or of cheerful acquiescence, in the events of that terrible year. The end of the war was followed, it is true, by an outburst of false prosperity, enriching profiteers and a few manufacturers, mainly owing, as Masterman, with his ironic cynicism, used to tell us, to the demand for decorated nightgowns and under-linen among the harlots of Argentina. But the gradual return of demobilised men by hundreds of thousands disorganised the labour market, and the men themselves found no place for their only marketable goods (their power of work), whereas during the war they had been promised all manner of pleasing rewards—situations kept open, widely distributed kisses, and homes for heroes. Add the fall in the purchasing value of wages to the increase of unemployment owing to the spoils extracted from Germany, and you need not wonder at the strikes that afflicted the coal-miners and all the country, culminating in the railway strike of September, which astonishingly revealed the joys of honest toil to the rich and great. A noble lord, for instance, was proud to milk goats in Hyde Park as his contribution to the country's safety.

But more disastrous than even our internal discontents was, in the first place, the crazy attempt of the Coalition Government to "put down Bolshevism" in Russia by landing forces at Archangel in support of Koltchak, Deníkin, and Yudénitch, who were attacking the armies of Lenin and Trotsky from other sides. As might have been expected, the intervention of foreigners only strengthened the central Government in Russia, and after months of futile effort and expenditure, Mr. Churchill's enterprise was ignominiously abandoned.

The whole episode was cause enough for indignation, but a stronger cause still was the atrocious Peace which vengeance was begetting upon ignorance amid the insolent revelries of Versailles. From a Memorandum of March 1919, since published, we have learned that Mr. Lloyd George went to

that fatal Conference with high ideals and generous impulses. His purposes were almost as fine as President Wilson's, his mind more alert, his ignorance of Europe not conspicuously more profound. But against the silent, rock-hewn figure of Clemenceau, that old Frenchman in suède gloves, described by Mr. Keynes, the intentions of goodwill and generosity beat in vain.<sup>1</sup> When a collection of "the little epicures of revenge" in our Parliament presented Mr. George with an ultimatum threatening withdrawal of their support, he collapsed; he shrank like an ebbing tide. So it was that Versailles envenomed international hatreds more than the war itself, and entailed upon Europe a longer train of misery.

No wonder the editor of the *Nation* was overcome with justifiable rage, which diverted his sympathies from the supposed representative of England for the rest of his life. And he did not stand alone in his condemnation. Writing while the Conference, in which he had acted for our Treasury, was still sitting, Mr. Maynard Keynes said:

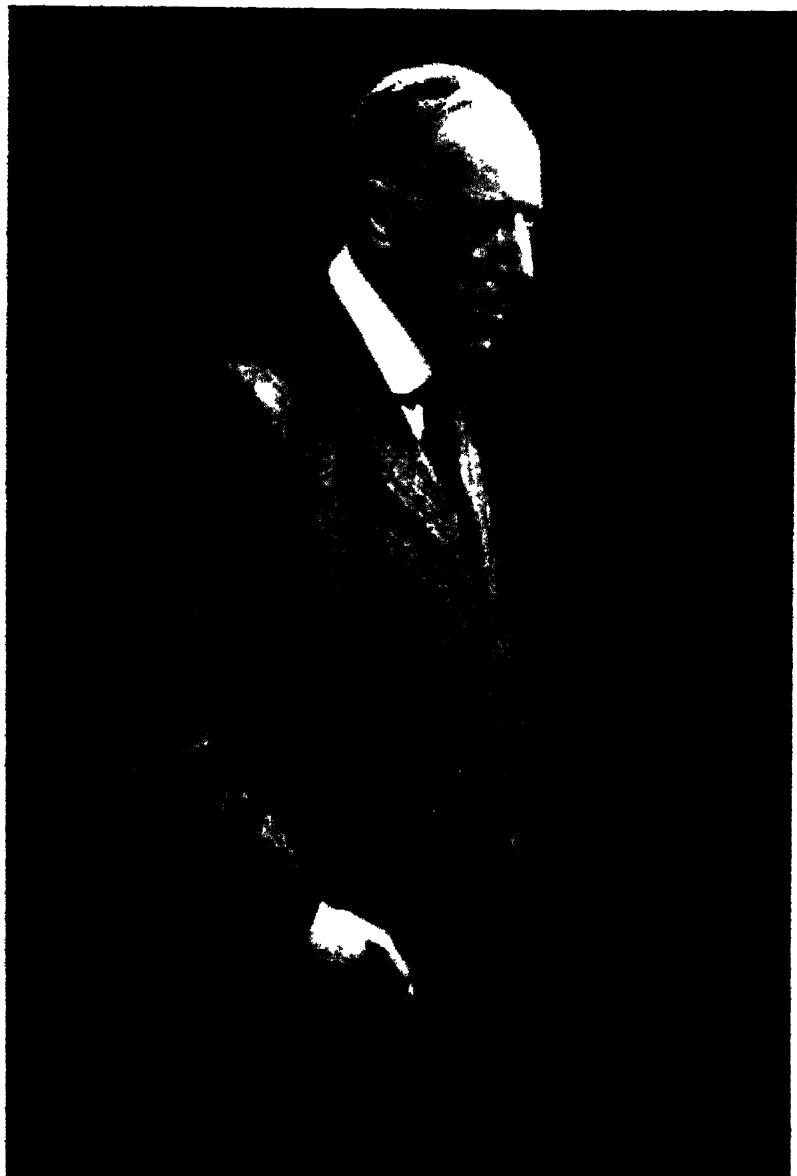
"According to this vision of the future, European history is to be a perpetual prize-fight, of which France has won this round, but of which this round is certainly not the last."

Or take what C. E. Montague wrote in his book, "Disenchantment":

"Germany lay at our feet, a world's wonder of downfall, a very Lucifer, fallen, broken, bereaved beyond all the retributive griefs which Greek tragedy shows you afflicting the great who were insolent, wilful, and proud. But it was not enough for our small epicures of revenge. . . . The soldier could only look on while the scurvy performance dragged itself out till the meanest of treaties was signed at Versailles."

Or, again, what Sir Ian Hamilton wrote in "The Millennium?":

<sup>1</sup> See "Economic Consequences of the Peace," by John Maynard Keynes.



*Petermann Longman*

**CECIL SHARP**



" Fatal Versailles ! Not a line—not one line in your treaty to show that those boys (our friends who were dead) had been any better than the emperors ; not one line to stand for the kindness of England, not one word to bring back some memory of the generosity of her sons ! "<sup>1</sup>

To recall the generosity of Wellington when France and her very Lucifer had similarly lain at our feet a hundred and four years earlier, was a hard strain upon the belief in democracy and " human progress " which we Liberals were once taught to accept. After Versailles our prophets could no longer offer us the hope of Positivist, Optimist, or Meliorist advance, and since then we have indeed been draining to its dregs the cup of bitter prophecy.

In regard to our follies in Russia and our acquiescence in the crime of Versailles, even Massingham in his *Nation* could do little beyond the almost impotent indignation of words, and I could do still less. Perhaps I achieved some small effect by denouncing up and down the country our atrocious system of blockade, continued for seven months after the Armistice, and causing the deaths of thousands of men, women, and children among Germany's peaceful population. As I was but a journalist and had stood alone in revealing the actual effects of this abomination when I was in Cologne, no great attention was paid to my protests until, early in March, General Plumer, commanding on the Rhine, telegraphed to Mr. Lloyd George that the discipline of the British troops was being undermined by the spectacle of the sufferings among German women and children under the stress of hunger. Even Versailles then agreed, in return for a rigorous system of payment, to send monthly supplies of food. But equally serviceable in the end was the creation of a " Fight the Famine " Committee, organised by some Quakers and other friends of mine among " The Stage Army of the Good," as I called it—a mere handful of merciful people, who contrived by their ubiquitous energy to conceal the paucity of their numbers. From time to time in our

<sup>1</sup> See note at end of chapter.

history that Stage Army of Mercy has stood ready for active service, always maintaining the prestige of the English name far more truly than the armies that are not required to march round behind the scenery and back again to the footlights.

Among the "distractions" of the time, one or two may be accounted pleasurable, though distracting. Such certainly was the celebration of Ruskin's memory by a meeting in the Fine Arts Society's rooms, Adelphi, on the centenary of his birth (February 8th), followed by the formation of a committee to arrange an exhibition of his drawings. In a previous volume I have tried to express my admiration for Ruskin, and my deep gratitude for his influence as an observer of nature, a draughtsman, a literary critic, and a Tory Revolutionist like myself.<sup>1</sup> So I was delighted to join Howard Whitehouse, of Bembridge; E. T. Cook, who by his biography and the superb edition of all Ruskin's works had erected such a monument as few men of genius have obtained; Alexander Wedderburn, who assisted in the erection of that monument; Lord Bryce, Sydney Carlyle Cockerell, of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge; Charles Aitken, of the Tate Gallery, Bernard Shaw, and a few others in arranging the meetings and the exhibition.

At the centenary meeting, I noticed that E. T. Cook spoke far the best, as was only natural; J. A. Hobson admirably too; Lord Bryce fairly, myself poorly, and Mackail like a burlesque of the Oxford manner, full of qualifications and half-beliefs. We of the appointed committee worked throughout the summer, meeting regularly in the House of Commons, and gathering a fine collection of Ruskin's drawings for an exhibition that opened at the Royal Academy on October 1st. It was a display of singular beauty and interest, the drawings being in themselves numerous and exquisite enough to have glorified the whole life of any single artist, and side by side with the drawings stood the noble series of his books. By permission of Sir

<sup>1</sup> "Changes and Chances," pp. 53-55, 103-106.

Aston Webb, who spoke at the opening as P.R.A., we kept the exhibition open for five or six weeks, and public addresses upon Ruskin and the various currents of his wide influence were given by Dean Inge, John Masefield, Charles Masterman, Howard Whitehouse, Bernard Shaw, and myself. It was a worthy commemoration, though a railway strike was closing access to London during part of the time, and a gloom was shed over all by the death of E. T. Cook on the very day of the opening ceremony in honour of the genius whose reputation he had himself done more than anyone to promote and maintain.<sup>1</sup>

Another "distraction" of that year, at least as pleasurable as that attempt to serve the ghost of my old Master, was the beginning of my friendship with Cecil Sharp, who, by his enthusiastic collection of the English folk-songs and folk-dances was then restoring some vestiges of gaiety to the English people. Before the war I had known him chiefly as the elder brother of Evelyn Sharp, that creative and humorous writer, and self-devoted Suffragette,<sup>2</sup> but now I began to listen to his accounts of the old English ballads which he had succeeded in rescuing from forgetfulness among the Appalachian mountains between Tennessee and Kentucky where Border settlers, living in idyllic simplicity from Queen

<sup>1</sup> I had been acquainted with E. T. Cook at various times since we were at Oxford together, as when he was in turn editor of the *Pall Mall*, the *Westminster*, and the *Daily News*, and when, later, on being ousted from the *Daily News*, he was leader-writer with me on the *Daily Chronicle*; or when again, he superintended the censorship of my "Dardanelles Campaign" towards the end of the war. Throughout, I admired and respected his intellect and character, as everyone did, but I could never describe myself as his friend. Few could do that. As I once wrote of him : "I knew him to be a man of extraordinary knowledge, of sensitive justice, and capable of unusual generosity, which his natural shyness concealed under a frosty and even repellent manner. So warm-hearted, in fact, was the nature hidden behind that unemotional face and those chilling grey eyes that he allowed his feeling of friendship sometimes to influence his political sense, and even his sense of justice." ("Changes and Chances," p. 294.) His devoted service to Ruskin's memory seemed to stand in contradiction to the apparent coldness of his nature, but, like that coldness, the contradiction was only apparent.

<sup>2</sup> See "More Changes More Chances," pp. 331-333.

Anne's time, had preserved them untouched. In boyhood I had learnt by heart all the ballads I could find, especially the Border ballads of the Lowlands and my own ancestral country of the Lakes, and here were hundreds more, some new to us, some amplifying the fragments we had known. The primitive inhabitants of those almost unvisited mountains were regarded among enterprising Americans as "white trash," but in their traditions they possessed a wealth beyond the dreams of American success in business. Unhappily, owing to the Christian Puritanism that dates their departure from our country, they have lost our traditional dances, with the one exception of the continuous maze called the "Kentucky Running Set." But, inspired by the sight of a villagers' dance at Headington, Oxford, Cecil Sharp had already gone up and down our own counties, chronicling the relics of all country dances, sword-dances, sacrificial dances, and Morris, besides deciphering Playford's book of country dances, first published in the heart of the seventeenth century. He himself became an admirable folk-dancer, and there was a kind of inspiration in his playing of the traditional music.

Everyone now knows the result—how the English Folk Dance Society, which he founded, has spread the knowledge and practice of the ballads and dances throughout the whole country, so that thousands of young men and maidens, old men and children now enjoy our national heritage day after day throughout the year. But I suppose few could now realise the rapture with which I first watched one of Cecil Sharp's picked teams performing a series of the dances, simple and complicated, with the utmost perfection of rhythm, movement, and music. To me, and no doubt to everyone, there is something intensely moving in a performance executed to absolute perfection, whether by orchestra, dancers, or a battalion of the Coldstream Guards on parade. I had always longed to move in time to music, but as the Evangelicals of my boyhood regarded dancing as one of the numerous avenues to hell-fire, I had been given no oppor-



G. F. Green

"HEY BOYS!"

Last Changes, Last Dances



tunity except on skates and marching in step to a regimental band. Now I perceived a chance, though it was not till close upon seventy that I was able fully to enjoy it, and the time left me was then inevitably brief. But "Why should not Dr. Johnson add to his other powers a little corporeal agility ?" asked Dr. Johnson on hearing wild rumours that he was taking lessons of Vestris.<sup>1</sup>

Among our statesmen Ramsay MacDonald recognised the value of Cecil Sharp's service, and during his office as Prime Minister had placed his name first on the next list for "honours." But in that very year (1924) Cecil Sharp died, leaving the national work to be carried on by his sister Evelyn, his daughter Joan, Douglas and Helen Kennedy, Maud Karpeles, who had helped him most in collecting both songs and dances, a staff of carefully trained teachers, and Dr. Vaughan Williams, the composer.

Still another "distraction," pleasurable also in its way, though filling me with apprehension, was the publication of a selection from my own verses, chiefly composed within the few preceding years.<sup>2</sup> I had always been shy about my writing, even in prose, and that was why I began so late, as described in "Changes and Chances." Under the stress of journalism I had, it is true, written a portentous quantity, both in newspapers and in books, though the shyness, the reluctance, the doubt and hesitation have always remained, and have, no doubt, characterised all my "stuff." But one suffers in verse from a peculiar sensitiveness. It is almost too personal, too near oneself to be borne, and up to that time, except a few jolly burlesques, I had published hardly a line of verse under my own name, though a good deal without signature. Now the publisher insisted that the book must appear barefaced and flaunting my own name. I felt like a purdah woman stript of her veil, and to this day I have been

<sup>1</sup> Boswell : date 1781 : Johnson's age 72.

<sup>2</sup> "Lines of Life" (Allen and Unwin : 1920), followed in 1926 by a narrower selection in a number of the Sixpenny "Augustan Poets" (Benn).

unable to endure reading or hearing criticism of it, whether in praise or blame.

That autumn also I was politely invited (for the first time, I think, though not for the last) to stand as Member of Parliament for the Seven Universities, but then, as afterwards, I refused. One reason, no doubt, was that I should have had no chance of being returned, for whereas in all other countries known to me the great body of students are advanced in politics up to the point of revolution, in England a solid majority can be counted upon to vote Conservative. I cannot say why, for outside Oxford and Cambridge, they are seldom rich, and seldom sprung from the well-to-do classes. But, also, I knew I was not made for Parliament. I was not aggressive. I detested oratory not only because incapable of it. I could not endure the hanging-about, the waste of time, the stifling gossip, the calculation of Party tactics habitual in the House of Commons. Indeed, my attachment to any Party would be wavering, and I could not have worked up animosity to such opponents as Mr. Arthur Balfour or Lord Robert Cecil. So I gladly escaped from a personal danger that hardly even threatened me.

But more genuine, and entirely welcome, was an invitation in November to meet Litvinoff in Copenhagen on behalf of the *Daily Herald*. After great expenditure and waste of effort, the British troops had been withdrawn from Archangel at the end of September; the cause of the three Tsarist generals opposing the Soviet Government was obviously collapsing; and, speaking at the Guildhall on November the 8th. Mr. Lloyd George had announced our Government's willingness to discuss terms of peace, if the Soviets would appoint an authorised agent. For he recognised, as he said, "the importance of giving peace to Russia!" Litvinoff was not exactly an authorised agent; nominally he came only to discuss the exchange of prisoners, as delegate for the Red Cross; but everyone knew that the appearance of a Soviet leader outside Russia might imply more than motives of humanity. James O'Grady, M.P. for a division

of Leeds, was sent by the Government to negotiate about the prisoners, but some correspondents went with other hopes, among them Alexander Thompson, founder, with Blatchford, of the *Clarion*, author of the comic opera, "The Arcadians," and Labour correspondent of the *Daily Mail*—a man of varied sympathies and capacity.

Owing to storms and the Russian indifference to time and space, I had to wait many days for Litvinoff's arrival, and so became acquainted with a singularly beautiful city, and a singularly charming and friendly people—I suppose the happiest people in Europe, and therefore the least known. At the time, however, their hospitality was not extended to Bolsheviks, and seven hotels in turn refused Litvinoff admission. When at last he found rooms in a little inn, I was the only correspondent he would receive, and after two or three prolonged conversations I was able to frame an account of the Soviet views which he approved. In the light of subsequent events, especially owing to the appointment of Litvinoff himself as first representative of the Soviet Government at the League in Geneva (1927), a few extracts from this communication are still of interest.

He said that he had come about the exchange of prisoners, but he regarded an understanding of the Russian Government's aims and position as being humanitarian too; for it might solve a problem that was then causing untold misery to millions. He maintained that the Government had absolutely no Imperialistic designs. They aimed neither at Constantinople nor any other extension of frontier. The Soviet ideal was a federation of peoples attached to Russia by position and economic relations.

There followed a passage which I quote in full, because if only the Soviet Government had maintained the intentions there expressed, I should now regard them with very different feelings :

"No military pressure," Litvinoff said, "should be brought, for instance, against Georgians or Letts or Ukrainians if they chose to stand aside" (he admitted the special difficulty

of the Ukraine owing to its rapid changes in social order and government). "Secession would be allowed to all, in the hope that a natural economic alliance would bring all together in time. Even Siberia could separate if it chose the national or bourgeois condition rather than the Soviet, as Poland had chosen at present. When the Letts reconquered their Baltic province from the Germans, Moscow at once acknowledged their independence ; and so throughout."

It is pitiful to remember that in spite of those words, and in spite of a definite Treaty of Independence signed in the following spring, the Soviets within a year had invaded the Georgian territory with a savage brutality unsurpassed by the Tsarist invasion which I had witnessed in 1906-1907.

Litvinoff went on to speak of the enthusiasm pervading the Soviet armies. Conscription was enacted, but none of the conscript classes had been called up for some time back, because towns and villages vied with each other in sending special detachments to the points of danger. *Moral* was inspired by Communists despatched to the various fronts for this express purpose. The more nearly Deníkin, Yudénitch, and Koltchak approached the Soviet centre, the greater was the enthusiasm for protecting the revolution, even the Social Revolutionists and Social Democrats (Mensheviks) joining in its support as against a restoration of the Tsardom.

On the economic side, I may quote Litvinoff again :

" As you know, all work is nationalised so far as at present possible, and wages are fixed by scale according to occupation. The Intellectuals who have not run away are working at their special profession under the State. But I think lawyers at least must be having a poor time, for the old law has lapsed, and there cannot be many legal disputes about property where nearly all property is nationalised. In criminal cases, the State provides counsel for the defence.

" Land is allowed only to those who work it, but the produce remains private property, though it must be sold to the State. Under this head there is a good deal of illegal profiteering. And indeed the lust of thrift among all peasants in every country is one of the main difficulties in every social reform.

"Lenin is certainly prepared to grant concessions to foreign States and firms. We do this because we are realists, and we know what it is that foreigners really want by their intervention. All other excuses are cant, but they want concessions. It is better for Russia to purchase peace at this price than to squander more wealth and lives in a war which arrests all economic development.

"Besides, the last five years have brought such ruin on Russia that she cannot re-start her economic life without foreign aid. She must have machinery and implements, for which we have not sufficient gold or valuables or produce to pay. So we must sell concessions, though quite aware of the resulting difficulties.

"At present we are compelled to take a temporary and transitory middle course between Capitalism and Communism. Full Communism is possible only if other countries accept the same economic basis. They will either follow our example, or, if Russia is before her time, she will have to revert to Capitalism."<sup>1</sup>

Those were the most significant points in my conversations with this remarkable man—large, sallow, heavy in figure and face, looking out on the world with a humorous but slightly puzzled expression, as well he might; too definite and decisive, I thought, for the ordinary theoretic Russian, but not noticeably Jewish. Indeed his wife, herself a Jewess, protested to me he was not Jewish at all. I had known her as Miss Ivy Low, niece of Sir Sidney Low, and at parting Litvinoff entrusted me with various presents for her, together with a large doll for their little daughter. As I was regarded with great suspicion by the landing officers at Harwich, I inwardly hoped that they would cut the doll open in search for hidden documents, and find nothing but sawdust. But in this hope I was disappointed.

Yet, throughout all these "distractions" and my regular work in journalism, my chief interest and chief endeavours as a writer were centred in Ireland. Indeed, during the three years after the Armistice my visits to Ireland were so

<sup>1</sup> The full account of these conversations appeared in the *Daily Herald* of December 1st, 1919.

frequent, and my mind so concentrated upon the disgrace to my own country's reputation there that for the first and last time I received an indignant protest from Massingham, accusing me of leaving him in the lurch when he wanted articles from me upon different subjects, while I was all the time writing about Ireland for the *Daily Herald*, the *New York Nation*, or the *Contemporary Review*, and was, besides, speaking on the subject up and down the country.

Throughout 1919, on every visit I found the situation hardening, the hopes of conciliation and arrangement rapidly fading away. Once, in March (the 26th), I watched the English garrison preparing as for another Easter Week. All day long our soldiers paraded the streets of Dublin. Guns and cavalry paraded. Tanks and armoured cars rumbled about, while overhead flights of aeroplanes buzzed, in battle formation, like wild ducks. Machine guns were reported hidden on the roofs of the Bank of Ireland and Trinity College, commanding Dame Street, Grafton Street, and the O'Connell bridge. At night the parading soldiers were withdrawn to barracks or kept ready in secret ambushes. It was announced that Mr. De Valera, as President of Sinn Fein, or even of the Irish Republic, was to enter in state over Mount Street bridge, the scene of his defence in Easter Week, and there the Lord Mayor was to present him with the keys of the city, as though he were a conquering king, and to conduct him to a vast meeting in the Mansion House. As the Sinn Fein executive might have foreseen from the history of seven centuries, the procession and meeting were proclaimed. But apparently they had not foreseen that, "to avoid bloodshed," Mr. De Valera would abandon the programme altogether, and leave the expectant crowds idly wandering about, as I saw them, while they compared the surrender to that grievous day when O'Connell cancelled the proclaimed meeting at Clontarf—a memory of evil omen. Had Ireland, then, lost yet another leader, or again been betrayed? So anger multiplied on disappointment, and it found vent in the horrible outlet of murdering the



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GEORGE RUSSELL ("Æ")



police. The excuse was that the murdered police were false Irishmen who had joined the enemies of their country, but the excuse did not mitigate the horror.

In July I found the situation outwardly quieter and I was able in comparative peace to enjoy long drives through the country with James MacNeill<sup>1</sup> and his brother Charles, the student of Irish antiquity. Also I enjoyed an oasis of peace with John Masefield and John Galsworthy at Cushendun in the glens of Antrim, where the Parrys had made their home. Long discourse I enjoyed too with Mrs. Alice Stopford Green in her Dublin watchtower, and with "Æ." who one night absorbed me in an exuberant monologue, as here abbreviated :

" After showing me his recent pictures of Donegal, where he promised one day to be my guide, he went off upon his relation to the Catholics, against whom he has only twice turned—once, I think, over Parnell, and again over Larkin. Otherwise he had never felt any trouble or interference in his work. Then, in his magnificent manner, he launched out upon the spirit of fire in man, usually expended upon sex and food, but capable of rising (apparently by way of the spine) from those organs to the centre of the brain, and there yielding strange and vast visions. Concentration upon some abstract form may draw it up, other thoughts and passions, such as anger and envy, being carefully banished. He has himself practised this method for half an hour a day, without physical aids such as starvation, and with results that sometimes frighten him. Meditation should follow this concentration, but is not the same. Nor is the inspiration of the arts the same, though it also may follow. Twice he has spoken under inspiration, hearing great voices calling him, and seeing visions of fire and light, but then absolutely forgetting all he said. As a rule, as at the great meeting in the Albert Hall, he carefully retains control and consciousness, and he thinks the balance between this concentration and action must be maintained ; otherwise he fears madness.

" He spoke much of a friend named Price, who had lived long among Red Indians and heard splendid spiritual

<sup>1</sup> Now Governor-General of the Free State.

legends from them, and much of magic. He also quoted a lot of the Gita and other Hindu scriptures.

"He feels a dislike and contempt for ordinary spiritualism, but thinks a kind of animal spirit may hang for a time around the dead, as seen in an electrified dead dog. But this is a low form of spirit, and is further distorted by the medium. To myself he seemed to be following in pursuit of Wordsworth's 'fallings from us, vanishings, blank misgivings of a creature moving about in worlds not realised.' But even to me, who am so incapable of spiritual vision, it was all fascinating ; most fascinating was the man himself. We stood for an hour while he poured out wisdom, all else forgotten."

I am sure that George Russell ("Æ.") retained that spiritual vision during the following terrible year (1920), for he possesses the saint's power of living the double life, and being at the same moment in two places—the tangible world and the spiritual world. But by most people in Ireland little visionary glory could then be perceived. For in that country's wretched history since the English invasion, that year will always be counted beside the atrocious ages of Elizabeth, Cromwell, the Penal Laws, 'Ninety-eight, and the Famine ; and much as I have seen of wars, its successive months remain in my memory as conspicuous for horror. It was the year of the "Black-and-Tans," the year of the "Auxiliaries," the ex-officers, to whom I unjustly added the title of ex-gentlemen—unjustly because none of them could ever have been a gentleman ; and, indeed, most officers of the Regular Army in Ireland repudiated them altogether.<sup>1</sup> Worst of all, it was the year of "reprisals," at first unauthorised, but officially authorised in the following January by Mr. Lloyd George's Government.

<sup>1</sup> "They can best be described as a tough lot. Those companies that had the good fortune to have good commanders, generally ex-Regular officers, who could control their men, performed useful work, but the exploits of certain other companies under weak or inefficient commanders went a long way to discredit the whole force."

"Annals of an Active Life." By General Sir Nevil Macready ; vol. II., p. 483.

On that matter of reprisals I can allow politicians and lawyers to speak, for they speak with authority, and I agree with their judgment at least as heartily as usual. I am old enough to remember the storm of indignation to which Mr. Gladstone roused this country when a similar policy of reprisals was carried out by the Turks upon the Bulgars, though England's honour was not then directly involved. But let me take an instance more distinctly parallel. Speaking in December, 1900, upon the reprisals in the South African War, Mr. Lloyd George (the same man who, as Prime Minister, authorised the reprisals in Ireland), asked in his eloquent manner :

“ What justice is there in punishing one man for offences committed by others over whom he has no control ? . . . I do not think it is calculated to impress the inhabitants of these two States (the Transvaal and the Orange Free State) with a clear sense of the even-handed justice they are likely to have at our hands.”

It was these reprisals that Campbell-Bannerman described as “ methods of barbarism,” and though the phrase made him unpopular at the time, he became Prime Minister within a few years. It was the reprisals upon the Irish people that Mr. Asquith called “ a hellish policy ” (November 19th, 1920). In his charge to the Grand Jury in Belfast, December 1st, 1920, Mr. Justice Pim laid down the legal dictum : “ There can be no legal reprisals. If reprisals were carried out, or if there were an excuse for that kind of thing, it would lead directly and absolutely to anarchy, and to nothing else.” Yet in little more than a month after that ruling, Mr. Lloyd George’s Government authorised reprisals as legal. Equally decisive with the judge’s ruling was the letter that Sir John Simon sent to *The Times* of April 25th, 1921—Sir John Simon, a man of cool and strictly legal mind, though in those days roused to a heat of indignation over the Government’s crime :

“ The policy of reprisals,” he wrote, “ is both politically

disastrous and morally wrong. Instead of restoring peace, it is intensifying war. Instead of vindicating British prestige, it is exposing us to the scorn of the world. It is adding day by day to the store of bitter memories which keep Britain and Ireland apart. It is turning Mr. Lloyd George's heroics about the rights of small nations into nauseating cant. It is undermining the character and self-control of hundreds of young Englishmen by permitting them to indulge in deplorable excesses of every kind. It is directing the energies of hundreds of young Irishmen into the horrible channels of assassination and outrage, when their inextinguishable devotion to their own land ought to be working out a better and happier future for Ireland."

In so far as anything could be satisfactory to myself in those appalling months, it was some satisfaction to find that my own feeling was thus supported and confirmed by masters of law and political life, including the Mr. Lloyd George of twenty years earlier. It was even more satisfactory to have my own accounts of what I was then witnessing in Ireland established by Cardinal Logue, an old, old man of known moderation and studied discretion, always avoiding party prejudice in national affairs. In his Pastoral Letter of the end of November, 1920 (a few weeks before the reprisals were authorised), he thus described the condition of his country :

" Men are taken from their homes and shot because they are suspected of sympathy with Sinn Fein, their captors acting promptly as judges, juries, and executioners. Lorries laden with armed men career through the country day by day, and when the unhappy people seek cover or fly, as one naturally would when a cry is raised of a mad dog at large, or a savage beast escaped from a menagerie, that flight is taken as sufficient proof of guilt, and they are pitilessly shot down at sight. No false pretences, no misrepresentations, no pall of lies, even though they were as dark as Erebus, can screen or conceal the guilt of such proceedings from anyone who knows and can weigh the facts."

Into this region haunted by the mad dogs of my own

country and by young Irishmen driven, as Sir John Simon wrote, into the horrible channels of assassination and outrage, I was hurried at times during the autumn of 1920, after returning from my first journey to America (to be spoken of in the next chapter). On one of these rapid visits, early in October, the Diarmid Coffeys' house in Pembroke Road, where I was staying, was raided in daytime by a squad of Regular soldiers, and in my room I held converse with a smiling young officer, who, with courtesy and as one ashamed of his orders, remarked that this sort of job was better suited to aliens. To which I replied that aliens were doing it. But he still retained politeness, and having searched the whole house and dug up the garden in vain, he withdrew his men to barracks. I mention his conduct to show the difference between the Regulars and the Black-and-Tans or those Auxiliaries who, as receiving a guinea a day and all found, no doubt considered it their duty to justify their income by their savagery. Next day I was driven round the small towns of Trim, Navan, and Balbriggan to witness the effects of the energy in reprisals displayed by one or other of those governmental bodies. At the time, the fate of Balbriggan was the most notorious, for there the Black-and-Tans, swooping down from their quarters a few miles to the north, had burnt thirty-five houses and a factory in revenge for the death of a policeman in a drunken brawl. But the memory of this atrocity was soon to be obliterated by worse.

It was on this visit too that I came to know Erskine Childers more intimately than before. I had met him once or twice in Dublin as a friend of Mrs. Green, and had read with admiration his book, "The Riddle of the Sands"—one of those items that added to England's alarm at the growth of the German Navy before the war. Now I came to know him in his own house, beside his beautiful and emotional American wife, who lay invalided upon a couch, inspiring her husband, her young children, and many admiring young men and women, never never to depart

a hair's breadth from the resolve to win absolute separation from the British bond, but rather to fight to the death against the hereditary foe.

I might well have met Childers in the South African war, where he served among the C.I.V. with great distinction, afterwards writing a volume of *The Times* history upon it. He was a man of exceptional courage and uncompromising intellect, the very type of those "geometrical politicians," as "Æ." called them, who drive logic to extremes, and choose extinction rather than conciliation. Perhaps this strictness of logic as applied to human life, which is so far from logical in its variegated complexities, was due to his Cambridge training, and certainly it was strongly enforced by his wife's unyielding temperament. Whenever I saw him during those years of struggle I perceived signs of increasing strain and nervous intensity plainly written on his deeply lined face, and I noticed that he entirely ceased to smile. His English blood made his position as one of the leading extremists all the more difficult, and he was rather fond of insisting upon it. When speaking at open-air meetings in the Dublin streets, he would begin, "I am the Englishman, the damned Englishman!" and would look round, partly apologetic but far more defiant. The ultimate Treaty only hardened his logic and stiffened his resolve, and so he went on, stubbornly devoted to his fixed ideal, unwavering in his simplicity, until in a Free State gaol he faced the firing party and fell pierced with the bullets of the people whom he had given his life to serve. For the ironies of life are not little.

On my return to London in mid-October, a small party of us paraded Parliament Square with placards and posters bearing appropriate inscriptions, such as "We English Protest," "Stop Reprisals," and "Terrorism is not Government," amid an apathetic or hostile crowd of onlookers. But in consequence of a meeting in the House of Commons, at which Bernard Shaw, Sir Horace Plunkett, Robert Lynd, and Joseph Devlin were present, we formed a body called

"The Peace with Ireland Committee," under the chairmanship of Lord Henry Bentinck (how serviceable is a Conservative with extremist views!). On that very day (October 25th) Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, died in Brixton gaol, having fasted on hunger-strike for seventy-four days. Thomas MacCurtin, his predecessor as Lord Mayor, had been murdered, almost certainly by the police, in Cork in the previous March, and MacSwiney was arrested in August and brought to London on the charge of possessing an R.I.C. code and seditious documents. With Professor Stockley (Professor of English in Cork University) and others I had spoken outside Brixton gaol to large and fairly sympathetic gatherings, and other protests had been made against the Government's resolve to let him die, but in vain. Mr. Bonar Law, as leader of the House of Commons, announced that the Cabinet's decision for death was absolute—a decision that further embittered the Irish people against us, and ultimately involved the Irish people themselves in terrible disasters.

Three days after MacSwiney's death I joined the procession of the Irish in London that conducted his body from Brixton gaol to Euston, amid the respectful silence of the English crowds lining both sides of all the streets. I then followed the coffin to Cork, the English Government having refused to allow it to be landed in Dublin. Beside one branch of the river Lee, in the rather beautiful City Hall, soon afterwards burnt down by our Black-and-Tans, I went with the Irish people who passed continuously two and two round the open coffin, guarded by Irish Volunteers, while outside, the streets were paraded by British regiments with armoured cars. The exposed face of the dead man was yellow-pale, wasted to extreme thinness, but fine and resolute—the face of a poet as well as a patriot. On the door of the Hall a large placard repeated the coffin's inscription : "Terence MacSwiney, murdered by the Foreign Enemy, in the Fourth Year of the Republic."

Next day (Sunday, October 31st) a long procession

followed the coffin, headed by a body of Franciscans, with the Archbishop of Perth (West Australia) and the Bishops of Cork, Kerry, and Ballarat. Irish Volunteers lined the whole route, which led over Parnell bridge, along the Mall to the National Monument, inscribed with the names of all the most conspicuous rebel patriots for three centuries past ; along Patrick Street, so soon to be burnt down by the Black-and-Tans or the Auxiliaries (dishonours "easy"), over the Patrick's bridge, along the banks of the Lee, and up the steep hill past Shandon church, famous for those poetic bells, and so to the Cathedral on the summit of the highest ground. In the procession were Arthur Griffith, James MacNeill, and Tom Johnson, the Labour leader in the Dail. The little son of Thomas MacCurtin, the Lord Mayor previously murdered, was chief mourner, with Miss Mary MacSwiney, into whose soul the bitterness of her brother's death entered as lasting poison. I marched with a solid formation of University Graduates. Sections of English and Scottish regiments, with fixed bayonets, steel hats, and machine-guns, watched at commanding points of the route, and all the officers saluted the dead. Over our heads a military aeroplane flew.

After the Mass, we crossed the river again, the crowds being thicker than ever, and processed along a street named after George Washington, also at one time called "rebel." Part of this line was held by Girl Volunteers, and a band composed of ex-soldiers, who had fought in the Great War for the rights of small nationalities, played "Adeste Fideles," while on the steps of the classic Court House, whose pediment bears the strange device "William the King," a platoon of English soldiers was drawn up with an armoured car and a machine-gun. So we passed the empty Protestant Cathedral, and the fortress gaol where two men had lately died and five were slowly dying, victims to the same insensate Government. After about three miles, we turned a little south into St. Finnbar's cemetery, watched by several lorries full of Marines and men of the Hampshire

regiment, with two armoured cars and machine-guns, posted there for reasons known only to the military mind.

Winding among cypresses and cedars, we found the grave in a quiet part of the garden, reserved for national heroes. The Franciscans chanted the "De Profundis." The Cathedral choir chanted a Requiem. Wreaths and flowers were laid. The Irish Volunteers stood thick around. At five o'clock the coffin was lowered, and Arthur Griffith spoke briefly in praise of the heroic dead. "Be consoled," he said in conclusion, "for Joan of Arc has now welcomed a comrade into heaven." A last salute was fired with revolvers, and there, under the cedars, we left the mortal body of one whose name will be remembered in Irish history as a symbol of fine sacrifice, and in our English history remembered with indignant humiliation, or be forgotten. If ever it was true that a soul went marching along, it was true of MacSwiney's soul. Death and disaster followed its march, and those who set it marching were guilty of disasters that fell upon others than themselves.

NOTE:—Lest it should be thought that the three quotations I give on page 158 represent only the inherent generosity of some among the British people, let me refer to the excellent book, "How Europe made Peace without America," by Frank Simonds (Heinemann, 1927). Mr. Simonds is an American journalist well versed in European affairs, which he regards with detachment, but with sympathy for the French side. The whole of the chapters called "The Treaty of Versailles," "Why the Treaty Failed," and "Woodrow Wilson at Paris," should be carefully studied, but I may extract a few significant sentences:

"The failure of the Treaty of Versailles was complete and abysmal. But the primary cause lay outside the territorial, military and reparations clauses. It was not the text but the spirit of the Treaty which made the settlement intolerable for all Germans. Interpreted in the spirit of Versailles, applied in the temper in which it was drafted, it seemed in all German eyes a vast and coherent programme designed to plunder and destroy a great people on the pretext of moral guilt." Page 34.

"Edmund Burke had once admitted that he was unable to discover a method by which to draw an indictment against a whole people. The victors of 1918 succeeded where he failed. In fact, they not only drew the indictment, but they compelled the accused to sign it." Page 43.

"Undoubtedly the German people would have resisted the material clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, even had the moral implications been absent. Certainly the creation of the Polish corridor, the cession of Dantzig, the loss of Upper Silesia would have aroused nation-wide resistance. But it was the sense of moral injustice which actually made the German revolt formidable, and this feeling was shared by all sections of the population. It was this consciousness of injustice which armed the spirit of the German for a conflict which was always unequal and inevitably disastrous."

Page 45.

Compare the scathing indictment in H. N. Brailsford's "Olives of Endless Age," pp. 63-94. I may also add one of the saddest and most conclusive condemnations of all—a letter from Professor Albert Cock that appeared in *The Times*, on January 11, 1928, after Thomas Hardy's death :

"In your leading article on Thomas Hardy you 'read into the sublime last chorus of "The Dynasts" some fugitive hope.' It is doubtful whether the poet himself had that fugitive hope. In 1922 I had a conversation with him at Max Gate, and I happened to refer to the very passage quoted by you from the last chorus. I expressed my gratitude to him for the note of deliverance offered there. He shook his head and said, 'I should not write that now.' 'Why not?' I asked in great surprise. Thomas Hardy replied, 'The Treaty of Versailles.'"

The lines referred to—that one "fugitive hope" appearing like a dubious star at the end of "The Dynasts"—run as follows :

*"But—a stirring thrills the air  
Like to sounds of joyance there  
That the rages  
Of the ages  
Shall be cancelled, and deliverance offered from the darts that were,  
Consciousness the Will informing, till It fashion all things fair."*

## CHAPTER VII

### ENGLAND'S REDEMPTION

*"When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive."*

Ezekiel, xviii. 27. (Authorised English Bible's Translation)

*"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, then were we like unto them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy."*

Psalm, cxxvi. 1. (English Prayer Book's Translation).

AS I returned from Cork through Dublin (November 1st, 1920), the officials in Mountjoy gaol were hanging a boy, Kevin Barry, on a dubious charge of complicity in the murder of a soldier, and men and women were kneeling in prayer around the prison walls. Perhaps it was owing to this British triumph that Lord Salisbury next day proposed the official authorisation of reprisals, and that Mr. Lloyd George in his speech at the Mansion House in London (November 9th) declared that his Government "had murder by the throat." Two days after that speech I was back again in Dublin, commissioned by the *Daily Herald* and resolved if possible to investigate the rumoured outrages and atrocities on both sides in the south and west of the country. At Plunkett House in Merrion Square, I heard that since the Spring thirty-three of the Creameries, so carefully organised for years past by "*Æ.*" and Sir Horace Plunkett, had been destroyed by the British irregular forces, chiefly in Tipperary and Limerick (ultimately the number rose to over fifty). In a motor lent me and driven by Dr. Neil Watson, who had served with distinction in the R.A.M.C. during the war, and was then engaged chiefly in treating shell-shocked soldiers, I

started west on November 13th, accompanied by James MacNeill, who by nature and by twenty-five years' honourable service in the Indian Civil Service at Poona and elsewhere had learnt the arts of silence and right judgment such as fitted him for his present position as Governor-General of the Free State.

Templemore, where first we stopped, had been looted of what cash it possessed, and had its chief buildings and some houses burnt "in reprisal" a few days before, but had lately also been attracting attention owing to "bleeding statues," discovered by a young lad in a private house where he was lodging. Crowds had gathered, hoping for a lesser Lourdes, but when I examined the statues themselves—little plaster images such as one sees in most Catholic homes—it was fairly obvious to me that the reddish-brown stains upon them were dried blood, almost certainly supplied by the hysterical boy himself, and I was glad to find that the priests had wisely refused to take much notice of the "miracle," and were then keeping watch over the boy in one of their hospitals or homes.

We went on through the exquisite scenes and colours of Ireland—the most beautiful country I have known. Through Thurles and past Holy Cross Abbey, and past the historic mount of Cashel, where ancient castle and abbey look far over the Tipperary plain. All the way was marked by ruined police-barracks, and creameries and cabins ruined in reprisal. Between Bansha and Galbally, we were stopped by a squad of soldiers under an officer in mufti, guarding the smoking remains of two lorries. Two policemen had been killed in ambush there the afternoon before, and we should have been arrested but for the inscription of "Capt. R.A.M.C." upon Neil Watson's kit bag. Passing through the Galty mountains, soon to be the scene of the tragedy at Bealnablah when Michael Collins was killed by his own people (August 22, 1922), we came to Mitchelstown ("Remember Mitchelstown!" cried Mr. Gladstone when one single Irishman had been shot there, I think accidentally,

so many years before), and for the night we reached Mallow, partly ruined already, and soon to be ruined more.

Thence the Killarney road led us along the bank of the Blackwater as far as the desolate Rathmore station—desolate in position, and because no trains were then running in Southern Ireland owing to the railwaymen's refusal to convey British troops or police in arms. A long straight road over hill and dale leads from that point to Castle-island in Kerry, which had been attacked in wantonness rather than for bloodshed. But going along the Tralee road we were brought up by a deep trench, and found that the creamery and minute village of Ballymacelligott had been raided and mainly destroyed by Black-and-Tans two days before (November 13), and a farmer had been shot dead while running across his field. Many years afterwards I met a man who told me he was in command of the attack on that occasion, but as I could not laud his prowess, he fell silent. A few weeks afterwards the whole village was utterly destroyed.

Tralee was a centre of Black-and-Tan activities. The City Hall and several houses had already been burnt. From time to time during our night there I heard the smashing of doors and the outcries of the inhabitants as private homes were raided. Only after manœuvres for complete secrecy could I contrive to speak to the leading people of the town. Shortly before our arrival, Hugh Martin, my colleague on the *Daily News*, had been violently threatened by Black-and-Tan officers for describing the true conditions of the district, and had barely escaped with life through a necessary lie. It was here that the British armed forces drew a cordon across the main street and forced all passengers to kneel in the mud with their hands over their heads and take the Oath of Allegiance. They then proceeded to a cinema, and, flourishing revolvers, called upon the spectators to sing the English National Anthem, a tune little known in those parts, and not becoming more popular. I wondered at the time what the King thought of such allegiance,

and what God thought of such prayers for the King's salvation.<sup>1</sup>

From Tralee James MacNeill was obliged to return by car to Dublin, and I drove on with Dr. Neil Watson through Abbeydorney and Ardfert (where a young girl, Mary O'Connell, while hurrying two children into safety, had lately been shot dead on the open road by a Black-and-Tan), and so through Lixnaw and Listowel to Tarbert. It was a journey of singular beauty, the world of sea and mountain and moor lying at peace in the passing lights and shadows of winter sun and cloud, but on the road our course was repeatedly checked by parties of armed men, who in the name of Law and Order were "shooting up" the poor little villages and burning the peasant homes almost at random. Next day we stayed awhile at Mount Trenchard, the beautiful house of aged Lord Monteagle, that wise and liberal-minded Irish patriot, whom I had met at various times before ; and so through Foynes we came to Limerick on the Shannon —"the City of the Violated Treaty" of more than two centuries earlier, now silent again in expectant terror. There a Franciscan, Father Philip, and Father Hackett, brother of Francis Hackett, journalist and novelist, whom I had known in New York, revealed to me, as it were in whispers, the curse that the British Irregulars had laid upon the place. And in the morning I called upon the Lord Mayor O'Callaghan in his City Court—a just and sensible man, far from revolutionary, but soon afterwards to be murdered at night at the door of his own house, in the arms of his beautiful and highly educated wife, who knew well the identity of the British murderers. Lord Mayor Clancy, who had just succeeded him in office, was murdered the same night (March 7th, 1921).

Through the whole of that region murder already prevailed. On reaching the bridge at Killaloe, where Lough Derg

<sup>1</sup> These events were narrated in the *Irish Times* of December, 1920, and that paper was certainly no friend to Sinn Fein. It risked prosecution, too, "for bringing the Crown forces into contempt." It did not occur to anyone to charge the Auxiliaries and Black-and-Tans with that offence.

pours out into the Shannon, we heard from the priest, Father Greed, and others, the terrible fate of four youths who had been shot dead on the middle of the bridge two nights before (November 16–17) by Black-and-Tans, who were conducting them under arrest. The excuse for the murder was “attempting to escape”—an excuse that was already becoming a laughable byword throughout the country. Their blood was still mixed with the mud upon the bridge itself. One of the dead, young Mihal Macmahon, was brother of the manager of Edward Lysaght’s farm at Raheen near by, to which we drove on for the night. It was a vast and rambling house, which Lysaght had divided among four families, and he had converted the estate into a model farm for dairy and other produce. Late at night, after the perfunctory police enquiry, we heard the four hearses rush past in a hurricane of wind under a clouded half-moon, and then we sat long together reading books of ancient Irish history and tradition with young Conor Clune, a devoted student of old Irish literature. In the morning he drove away in a car with Lysaght for Dublin, where he was brutally murdered in a guard-room of the Castle together with two fellow prisoners four days afterwards, on the charge of “attempting to escape!” That guard-room—that Castle gate—those wire entanglements all round the tortuous and only possible passage! Let us leave it at that, as the barristers say.<sup>1</sup>

After seeing the four youthful bodies, all pierced with bullet holes, in the chapel at Scariff, we drove on through Ennis, where Mrs. Vere O’Brien, a niece of Matthew Arnold, entertained us, and so through Gort to Lady Gregory’s home at Coole, justly celebrated by the poet Yeats, and by Lady Gregory’s own high service there to the remembrance of ancient Irish literature and the renewal of Irish dramatic

<sup>1</sup> After Mr. Lysaght gave evidence on Clune’s character and entire devotion to scholarship, his estate at Raheen was completely looted by Auxiliaries (ex-officers, whom General Tudor, their O.C., described as a *corps d’élite*), who carried off everything, including his mother’s under-clothes.

comedy in her own plays. That eager-spirited and humorous lady, with the bright brown eyes of a watchful hawk, received us in all hospitality into her lovely house, though we came without introduction, and I had met her only occasionally in London crowds. Happily, the house stands back some distance from the road where the Black-and-Tans were wont to disport themselves, and the splendid stores of Irish literature and treasured memorials of official residence with her late husband in Ceylon were still untouched. But of almost equal interest to myself were two little grandchildren, Anne and Katereen, who had nursed up a clean white pig to scamper about with them wherever they went, affectionate as a dog, and far more intelligent than a lamb. Yet over that gay and charming family also, not far in front, a fate was brooding, hideous in its darkness.

Driving on, we called at the cottage of Malachi Quinn, who had been left alone there with three children, his young wife (with child) having been shot by Black-and-Tans as she sat on her roadside wall with the youngest child in her arms. The Head Constable (R.I.C.) who lived in the cottage had not dared to give evidence. Thus we went on from point to point, at every place hearing of arson, plundering, and murder—two brothers Loughnane taken by the Black-and-Tans from Shanaglish, tied up with a rope in passing through Gort, and never heard of since (their bodies were afterwards found horribly mutilated in a pond); stories we could not verify of atrocious treatment of two girls at Clarinbridge; wanton destruction of reading-rooms and cottages at Oranmore and Peter's Well; and, while we were in Galway, the news came that the body of Father Griffin, a well-known Irish patriot, had been found in a bog away out towards Spiddal with a bullet in his skull.

On November 22nd, rumours more terrible still came creeping to us bit by bit. On the road we met Bishop O'Doherty of Clonfert, but he told us only of the customary outrages and reprisals by British forces. At Tuam we called

on the Archbishop, a wise and clear-minded man, who was advocating a "Truce of God," but told us he had just heard a rumour of terrible events happening the day before in Dublin. No posts or trains were coming, but an obscure telegram of evil omen had arrived. Driving on, in gloomy expectation, through Claremorris and Kiltamagh, we were stopped and searched in the darkness of a moorland valley by a military patrol, whose officer (a Regular) told us an appalling story of many British officers murdered in their beds in Dublin two nights before. "All shot in the back, I'll undertake," he added, bitterly. In extreme depression, all hope of that "Truce of God" now faded, I stayed that night in a little inn at Swineford, and next morning, in answer to my telegram, I received a message from the *Daily Herald's* regular correspondent in Dublin, asking me to return as the situation was beyond him. We drove with all speed through Castlereagh, Athlone (the strategic centre of Ireland), where we were arrested and detained in the castle, to Mullingar, and on into Dublin again next morning.

It was November 24th, three days after that "Bloody Sunday," when fourteen British Intelligence Officers, living in mufti about the city, had been murdered, some of them as they lay beside their wives;<sup>1</sup> and when, in the afternoon, a force of Black-and-Tans had surrounded a vast gathering of spectators assembled to see a football match between Dublin and Tipperary in Croke Park, and had opened fire upon them, killing seventeen (General Sir Nevil Macready says ten) and wounding about fifty. It was two days later that the Irish scholar, Conor Clune, together with two of the Irish Volunteer officers, Peadar Clancy and Dick McKee, was murdered in Dublin Castle, probably as part of the reprisals. One must remember that such reprisals, though long customary, were not authorised by Mr. Lloyd George's Government till nearly six weeks later (January 3rd) as I mentioned above. But no excuse of

<sup>1</sup> General Sir Nevil Macready says two of the fourteen were R.I.C. and two were civilians : "Annals of an Active Life," vol. II, p. 508.

law and authorisation would justify me to myself in giving the order to open fire upon an unarmed crowd, whether in Dublin or Amritsar. Nor on the other hand would any excuse of patriotism and the execution of spies induce me to drag men from their beds and murder them before the eyes of their wives.

Early on November 25th, nine of the murdered officers were carried in their coffins along the quay of North Wall to be removed to England, great crowds standing to watch, silent and respectful, as the Irish always are to the dead. None the less I saw British officers going about among them, knocking off their caps with foul oaths, as though to provoke trouble. That day Arthur Griffith and John MacNeill were again arrested, and "Æ." crossed to London to discuss with Arthur Henderson and Mr. Lloyd George, who now suggested a truce. But during the night of the 29th–30th I heard the crashes of explosions while the Black-and-Tans were blowing up the Sinn Fein Bank at the corner of Harcourt Street and St. Stephen's Green, and were burning the offices of the *Freeman's Journal*, in association with which I was then working. Having remained for a few days to call upon Countess Markievicz in Mountjoy gaol, as once before in Aylesbury, and having, at her request, stood as near as might be to her at her Court-Martial on December 2nd, I took one of the first trains running to Belfast with James Good, so sensible, so excellent a journalist, and so intimate with that city, in which, though Limerick born, he had worked for many years. There I had the pleasure and advantage of renewing my friendship with Professor Henry, the Latin scholar and gallant upholder of Irish unity in the region of the infidels, and with Alec Wilson, of whom the same may be said, except that for Latin one might substitute farming, dogs, and now (1928) the League of Nations.

But just as I was trying to investigate the extreme labour distress in Belfast and was going round the Protestant and Catholic quarters into which the city is strictly divided, I

was instructed to join a Labour delegation that was visiting the south of Ireland. Arthur Henderson, William Adamson, Arthur Greenwood, General Thomson, and a few other Labour M.P.s came over, and I found them in Cork, which I reached from Belfast just in time before the hour of curfew, though a body of Black-and-Tans stopped A. P. Wadsworth, that excellent correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, and myself with revolvers as we drove to the hotel.

The Imperial Hotel will always be memorable to me because it was there that I was able to perform my "one good deed" for Ireland. In the morning, as five of the Labour delegates were starting for Bandon, ruined by the British forces, a poor fellow named O'Brien came to their motor's door, pouring out a complaint that "those ruffians" had wrecked and looted his little shop that night, terrifying the children of the two families living there out of their wits. Instantly an officer in khaki uniform, wearing three war medals, dashed down the hotel steps upon him from behind, put a revolver to his head, ran him to and fro, up and down the street, with the muzzle at his brain, dragged him into the hotel, and flung him on a bench, as though for immediate execution. When I expostulated that the man certainly did not intend personal insult, for he could not have seen the officer behind him, rage began to abate, and the officer contented himself with sending O'Brien off in a cart under charge of police. When I visited his little shop in the afternoon I found all the sweets and cakes had been carried off, the glass, pictures, piano, and every bit of furniture smashed to pieces. But what a welcome I received from the man himself, the two mothers living there, and all the ten children as being the deliverer of their life's mainstay! I have written much on Ireland, but it has all passed into the oblivion of the papers that the British Museum Library Catalogue calls the "Ephemerides"—ephemeral and passing shadows, like the May-flies that live but for a day. This was my one good deed, as distinct from words, and I have sometimes tried to calculate how many thousands I should

have felt bound to commit if only I had been a Boy Scout from the beginning.

That same afternoon, as I came out of the *Cork Examiner's* offices into the open space or square of Patrick Street, I saw a party of Auxiliaries (ex-officers) seizing the whips from the jarvies in the outside-cars and lashing the passers-by as they were shopping and going about their ordinary business. I admit the extreme provocation of the time, for only eight days before (November 28th), an armed party of Auxiliaries had been attacked in ambush among the lonely mountains near Macroom, about twenty miles northwest of Cork, and many of them—I think fifteen—were killed. A survivor—I believe the only survivor of the party—was lying in my hotel pierced with bullets, his poor mother watching over him. It was as a further reprisal for that ambush that four days later the centre of Cork city—the square just mentioned—was burnt almost to the ground by bodies of Black-and-Tans and Auxiliaries apparently combined (December 11th). As the saying in Cork went, every cat and dog knew who did it, but the Government resolutely suppressed the official report by General Strickland, commander-in-chief of the district.<sup>1</sup> But criminal as was that “hellish policy of reprisal” by murder and arson, to my mind the insolence and scorn which prompted armed men to lash passers-by with whips as a joke, or compel them to kneel in the mud and take the oath of allegiance at the revolver’s point, or to sing “God save the King” under threat of assassination, revealed a lower depth of degradation in our Government’s agents. Such outrages would sink more deeply into the hearts and memories of a people who could never abandon the hope of deliverance from such tormentors.

Cardinal Logue’s comparison was exact. The people of Southern Ireland were living as though a mad dog might spring upon them at any minute and from any corner. It

<sup>1</sup> General Sir Nevil Macready says the fire and looting were the work of a company of Auxiliaries : “Annals of an Active Life,” vol. II, p. 521.

was a life of perpetual fear and strain. No one who had sympathy with the national cause could regard his property or his life as secure from hour to hour. No woman could regard her home and children as safe. Mothers took the children for refuge into the bogs and mountains, as I had seen them do in Macedonia under the Turks, and in the Caucasus under the Russians. In their homes the children could not sleep at night, and doctors told me that St. Vitus's dance and similar nervous affections were terribly on the increase. My urgent plea at the time was that, as a first step, the Auxiliaries and Black-and-Tans should be withdrawn or disarmed, and arms should be limited to the Irish police, who had some feeling for their countrymen, and to the Regular troops, who had some feeling for the honour of England's name. Our Government replied by authorising reprisals as legitimate procedure.

On returning to Dublin, I was secretly informed that the Auxiliaries were breathing out slaughters against me, as against Hugh Martin, and I evaded into Wales. Besides my ordinary work in journalism, I spent the first months of 1921 in speaking about Ireland up and down the country, especially in opposition to the Government's policy of authorised reprisals. It seemed to me a question of national honour. Should the country be driven to say, "All is lost, including honour ?" Or should it descend to a yet lower level, and say, "Excepting honour, nothing is lost ?" At the same time I tried to impress upon the audiences the truth of what "*Æ.*" in his noble idealism had urged me to remember even in extremes :—"In every human being there is something to which justice and righteousness can make appeal. You have only to find it." With me on the platform sometimes were kindly and reasonable leaders of the Labour Party, sometimes well-known leaders in other grades of society, such as Professor Browne, the Oriental scholar in Cambridge ; Bishop Maud of Kensington, brother of Willie Maud, my old colleague as war-correspondent in former campaigns ; Lord Buckmaster, ex-Lord Chancellor ;

and Lady Aberdeen. But none of us seemed able to find in our Ministers that point to which justice and righteousness could appeal. Reprisals, far from assuaging the hostile spirit in Ireland, only increased the number of ambushes and murders. Ambushes and murders only increased the number of executions, and to such an extent that I wrote in the *Nation* an article proposing "A New Way to pay Old Debts" by charging a sliding scale of rates for admission to the spectacle of the executions ; proceeds to be allotted to the sinking fund of our National War Debt.

In that year (1921) I was twice again in Ireland : first in May for the elections to the two Parliaments of Dublin and Belfast. Perhaps "election" was hardly the word in Southern Ireland, for 120 members out of 128 were returned as Sinn Feiners without any election at all. But after renewing friendships in Dublin, and adding to my friends Mrs. O'Callaghan, widow of the murdered ex-Lord Mayor of Limerick, Father "Paddy" Brown, the stalwart fighting priest of Maynooth, and a few others, I proceeded north with Wadsworth to Omagh, Derry, and Belfast again, where the election was running hot as between angels of light and devils of darkness, each party claiming to stand on the side of the angels. Then, and I wish I could hope it was for the last time, among the small hills and valleys of "County Up-and-Down" I heard the rattle of the Orange drum. The sound is like no other music. It prompts to war, but it does not throb like the war drum. It stirs to religious frenzy, but it does not boom like the drums of the African forest. With hard incessant little taps it rattles among the fields and hills. The drummer's cut and bleeding wrists, the bloodstained parchment of the drum, the accompanying crowd marching backwards in front of it, all proclaim a fervid ecstasy, as when Orientals march in rows, cutting themselves and shouting lamentations for the Prophet's race. The ecstasy is roused for Dutch William III and the Protestant God—that strangely assorted pair, thus combined in history and worship. But as wise Professor Henry then

said to me : " People here, whether Protestant or Catholic, don't think with their brains. They think with their solar plexus."

And so, on the Sunday, two days before the election, I heard one preacher crying to his embattled congregation, " The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon ! " meaning by Gideon either Sir Edward Carson or Sir James Craig, and assuring them that on the Tuesday God Himself would guide their pencils upon the ballot-papers. Another chose for text, " By the three hundred men that lap I will save you," meaning a sufficient majority of Protestant voters. Another preacher said that when he came to Belfast and heard the Protestant psalms and hymns, he always said to himself, " This is like the Israel of old. This is God's land, this the home of the open Bible, this the sacramental people." Whereas Catholicism, he told us, was " a Church whose whole history was the rearing of museums for the past, a Church that had always lived among relics and bones, a Church that lived by ancestor-worship, like the Chinese." How enviable, I thought, must be conviction assured like this ! But how desirable if only the Book of Joshua, the invasion of Palestine, and the slaughter of the Amalekites could be forgotten for ever, and these ingenuous people cease to live among the bones and relics of Jewish antiquity.

The election day came, and, as had been expected, the dead themselves, stimulated by religious zeal, on both sides rose from their graves and voted in accordance with their earthly convictions. It was even suggested that polling-booths should be erected in the churchyards. " *Debout les morts !*" cried the famous Frenchman when the enemy's assault upon Verdun was hottest. So in Ulster the dead arose to victory—the majority at least to a victory of 40 out of 52. That was on May 24th, and the next day the Sinn Feiners in Dublin burnt down the eighteenth-century Custom House beside the river. It was the most beautiful building in the city, but the British Government used it for stores, and fire consumed them all. The *Sinn Fein Bulletin*

pledged in justification : " The lives of four million people are a more sacred charge than any architectural masterpiece. The Custom House was one of the seats of an alien tyranny. If it had been possible to strike effectively at the tyranny it represented without injury to the structure, the Custom House would have been spared. But that was not possible." Yet I could not but think that those who destroy so noble a work of creative art, " slay," in Milton's splendid phrase, " an immortality rather than a life."

Outrages and reprisals still further increased. The Government had then about 50,000 armed forces in Ireland, and Mr. Lloyd George announced that the number was to be increased, while Lord Birkenhead, as Lord Chancellor, informed the House of Lords that there existed " a small war " between Ireland and Great Britain, which it was the Government's intention to carry to the bitter end, no matter with what regret or with what loss. All expected a war like the South African, with drives and devastation and concentration camps. For Ireland was to be " reconquered," as by the British invasions under Elizabeth and Oliver Cromwell.

Suddenly there came a healthful change, and one may attribute it in part to the King's courage in visiting Belfast for the opening of the Northern Parliament under the " Partition Act " (June 22nd). In his speech there he appealed to all Irishmen to pause, to hold out the hand of forbearance and conciliation, to forgive and forget, and to join in making for the land which they all loved a new era of peace, contentment and goodwill. On this occasion it seems probable that King George exercised the same kind of influence that Queen Victoria had sometimes exercised. For, two days later, Mr. Lloyd George invited Sir James Craig and Mr. De Valera to meet in conference in London. Something may also be due to General Smuts, who held a brief consultation with Mr. De Valera in Dublin early in July. I need not follow the prolonged and dubious negotiations, for, of course, I had no part in them, except by joining

the vast crowd (gallant Mrs. Green and old Count Plunkett among them) who welcomed Mr. De Valera and Arthur Griffith (lately released from prison) when they arrived at Euston (July 12th). And again when I stood waiting for hours at the entrance of Downing Street, amid rows of Irish women kneeling on the pavement and saying the rosary over and over again, without shame or self-consciousness, until the Irish leaders emerged from the first conference (July 14th).

For about a month secret conferences and discussions, chiefly by telegraph, continued between Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. De Valera, who persisted in asserting Ireland's claim to sovereign independence, which the British Cabinet could not grant. When at last it was known that the proposed terms would be published and laid before the Dail, I crossed again to Dublin (August 14th), and was sitting alone that Sunday evening with "Æ." when Countess Markievicz rushed in, bringing the news that Ireland was to have full Dominion status, with independent finance, limited military forces for home defence, her own police, and unity in government if North and South could agree. Great Britain was to retain control of the Irish seas and air defence, with free trade between the countries, and Ireland was to contribute a share of the National Debt. The Countess declared these proposals had already been rejected, and other women who came in, supported her in joyful excitement at the prospect of continued conflict. "Æ." on the other hand was terribly depressed, and spoke with bitter disappointment of the ruin of all his hopes for the country, especially as involving the destruction of his life's work in promoting co-operative farming. To him, as to myself, the terms marked an advance that would have seemed incredible even five years before—an incredible advance certainly upon anything that Parnell or Redmond ever imagined. So a day of hope ended only in despair.

On August 16th I was present at the first meeting of the new Dail, held in the Round Room of the Mansion House,

a ramshackle, circular hall, built originally to accommodate the drunken revels of George IV. The members took an oath to support and defend the Irish Republic and its Government. Professor John MacNeill was appointed Speaker, and opened the proceedings in the Irish language, which he understood, as did a few of the other members. Mr. De Valera then, adopting our common and comprehensible tongue, delivered what appeared to me a threatening and warlike address, declaring that the first duty of the Ministry was to establish a Republic, through which alone Irish freedom could be secured. It was evident to myself that his speech implied the rejection of the terms, though others continued hopeful. To me the one ray of hope was his assertion : "We are not Republican doctrinaires." But, unhappily, that was exactly what he and his most ardent supporters were. His speech next day upon the same scene only confirmed the apprehensions of those who desired peace. It absolutely rejected the terms—for the doctrinaires had won. Mrs. Green, in the wisdom of her long and intimate experience of English political life, said to me that the brains of many people like Erskine Childers had been so long poisoned and strained that, for their own health, they ought to be shut up to rest. On the other hand, that wise Quaker, James Douglas, and a few others, retained a hope which I as a downright Englishman could not understand.

Secret sessions of the Dail then began, and knowing that Mr. Alfred Cope, who was Assistant Under-Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, was still labouring for peace, I ventured into the Castle itself to call upon him ; for it was rightly supposed that he had a wholesome influence upon Mr. Lloyd George. I found him a youngish, black-haired man, with finely wrinkled face, unexpectedly courteous and friendly to myself. He still thought peace might come, and though he recognised all the danger of the doctrinaires, he believed that Arthur Griffith and a few others possessed political wisdom. He even thought that the Six Counties

of Ulster would ultimately come in when they found that "substantial" people were taking the lead in Southern Ireland.

As he spoke, the door was flung open, and with a crash appeared a small, alert, and brown-faced officer in a general's khaki uniform. It was General Tudor, "Police Adviser" in Ireland, and really in command of the Black-and-Tans and Auxiliaries. Hearing my name, he looked me up and down from hair to boots and back again in silence. For indeed there were probably few men in the world whom he regarded with such contemptuous hostility—a feeling amply returned so far as hostility went. He then began talking rapidly in the usual military style, especially praising someone who, in reference to the *Bulletin* and its editors (known to be Erskine Childers and his wife) had said to him, "Don't argue with the beggars. Shoot them!"

Perhaps with a side glance at me, he then fell to a violent attack upon Hugh Martin of the *Daily News* for abuse of "his men"; and upon General Crozier for having resigned because he was not permitted to maintain discipline among the Auxiliaries. He also charged the men of the Irish Republican Army with breaking the truce by drilling, importing arms, and wearing uniform. Mr. Cope urged the necessity of patience and some allowance for the excited passions of Irishmen, and taking me into another room, he impressed upon me, half in apology, that Tudor was "a mere soldier, but entirely white and straight, an excellent officer," as indeed he was to prove afterwards in Palestine. Altogether, it was evident to me that Mr. Cope wished to show himself kindly and conciliatory in the midst of the troubles. For which reason the Auxiliaries called him "a bloody Sinn Feiner."<sup>1</sup>

A few days afterwards I visited John Dillon again, and it was touching to observe how pleased he was. For indeed he was living as isolated as a cromlech or one of Ireland's

<sup>1</sup> For a soldier's estimate of Sir Alfred Cope, see General Sir Nevil Macready's "Annals of an Active Life," vol. II, pp. 492–493.

ancient crosses. He said, I don't know on what authority, that Mr. De Valera had come to a private understanding with Mr. Lloyd George before negotiations began, but as to the oath he could not stand up against the young men and young women who were crazy for bloodshed and excitement. He was furious about a "poisonous article" in the *Bulletin*. He had always thought Erskine Childers "a pernicious danger," and now he strongly condemned Mrs. Childers for her incitements and interference in Irish affairs. He knew that Mr. Lloyd George, whom he still admired for his cleverness, would grant everything but secession and the compulsion of Ulster, and so he still retained "some kind of hope," and I said goodbye to that noble, historic, and melancholy figure for the last time.

A few days later General Sir Nevil Macready, Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in Ireland, invited me to lunch at his headquarters in the Royal Hospital, the very beautiful classic building designed by Wren himself. I was rather surprised, but it appeared that he had been reading my telegrams to the *Daily Herald* and was pleased with my obvious desire for peace upon the proffered terms—a desire he almost desperately shared. Also he remembered me from old Ladysmith days, and at the head-quarters in St. Omer, when he was Adjutant-General to Sir John French. After lunch, during which two model A.D.C.'s, dressed with faultless prettiness, conversed with faultless propriety upon horses and sports, the General walked me for a long time up and down the beautiful garden, describing his extreme difficulties. The truce, he said, had only increased them owing to the Sinn Fein "pin-pricks," which he could no longer answer with military force. He said that, like all soldiers, he was only longing for peace, in the hope that he might get away and live in quietude upon a hill overlooking the Mediterranean. He would never have undertaken this job but for his personal affection towards "Johnnie French, so stupid and so lovable." He had told Alfred Cope that he himself still retained some feeling for the Empire, and would

leave Ireland keeping at least his shirt and trousers on, whereas Cope would go back stark naked. He knew all about the Erskine Childers faction, which he regarded as the chief obstacle to settlement ; and he appeared uneasy and harassed, but kindly and well-disposed at heart, as I had always found him in his former positions, which indeed were far less difficult.<sup>1</sup>

On August 26th the Dail met again in the Round Room of the Mansion House to declare the solemn result of its secret consultations. I was fully aware of the solemnity, but at first my attention was distracted by an American woman journalist beside me, who expressed herself as much interested in the chastity of the priests and friars among the audience, and the chances of overcoming it. To which I could only reply that I knew nothing about the subject, but she might try her chance, for no one was better fitted to succeed. At that she fell silent, and at noon Mr. De Valera read the Dail's answer to the British Cabinet. It was a complete and absolute refusal of the terms, without a glimmer of hope, and at the end Mr. De Valera made a short speech of defiance, expressing the belief that the British Empire would end before the Irish conflict against it ended. Such sentiments were enthusiastically applauded, as violent sentiments always are. But grim despondency settled down on myself and all my friends—Mrs. Green, James Good, James Douglas, Diarmid Coffey, and all the rest, excepting only “Æ.,” who has never despaired. Meeting John MacNeill, the Irish scholar, in the street, I was told, as was to be expected from a scholar, that he had felt obliged to stick to the abstract principle of entire separation, but did not expect England would fight, since her interest lay in peace, and there might be trouble in India. I replied that no better terms could be expected, and he was banking upon a terrible risk. But we parted on a friendly footing, and I returned to London, in deep depression at what seemed the

<sup>1</sup> The General's own detailed account of his difficulties in Ireland may be found in his “Annals of an Active Life,” p. 459 to end.

wreck of all that the English friends of Ireland and their own country had attempted so earnestly and so long.

Yet to some extent "Æ.'s" hope was justified. Mr. Lloyd George showed himself persistent and, as I thought, even compliant in the cause of peace. Telegrams and letters of negotiation were still exchanged, and at last, with an invitation to a renewed conference on October 11th, the Prime Minister stated that, though the Government definitely ruled out the supposition of an independent Republic, they would not now require a formal withdrawal of the claim from the Irish leaders. Rather strangely, as I still consider, Mr. De Valera appeared to regard this as a considerable concession, and on October 8th, I went to Euston to cheer the new Irish delegates on arrival—Arthur Griffith, stable and wise, Michael Collins, wise and heroic, R. C. Barton, alert and humorous, Gavan Duffy, torn between logic and life, and E. J. Duggan, whom I had not known.

A fortnight later, while the conference was still being carried on in secret, I sailed for the Washington Naval Conference, as will be mentioned in another chapter. But all day long upon that voyage I was held in suspense according to the wireless news. There came the telegram from the Pope, praying that the negotiations might bring an end to the age-long dissension between England and Ireland ; and then came Mr. De Valera's telegram to the Pope, proclaiming that the Irish owed no allegiance to the British King, and had already announced their independence by a regular election to the Dail. Then came the Parliamentary debate upon a vote of censure on the British Government for its pacific policy in Ireland, supported by the Die-hard group. And just as I landed in New York, we heard the news of the vote's defeat by 439 to 43.

Still I remained in a torment of anxiety as week after week went by. That tiresome and almost obsolete Oath of Allegiance was said to be the stumbling-block, and on December 5th we heard in Washington that, owing to

this difficulty, the conference in London had broken down. Then, the very next day, arrived the overwhelming news that the Treaty between Great Britain and Southern Ireland, now called "The Free State," had been actually signed. Unquestionably, that was one of the two happiest days of my life, the other being February 6, 1918, when the Woman Suffrage Bill was passed. I went about Washington possessed with joy, like unto those who dream, whose mouth is filled with laughter and their tongue with joy. I bought every paper in the streets that I might read the joyful telegram again. The sudden glory seemed incredible. Could it possibly be that the perennial stain upon my own country's reputation was now to be washed out ? Could it possibly be that Ireland had won for herself a reality of freedom so far beyond the imagination or hope of her greatest patriots during at least these hundred and twenty-three years of almost ceaseless struggle and misery ? So far as a mere English journalist can avail at all, I had written and laboured for this purpose throughout a generation of time, and now the end had come. What greater happiness could any human soul desire ?

On December 8th, I received the high honour of being invited—the only Englishman invited—to a great banquet in the Shoreham Hotel in Washington to celebrate the conclusion of the Treaty. Bishop Sheahan was in the chair, and speeches of rolling and exultant eloquence were made by exuberant old Bourke Cochran, who had long led the Irish movement in Washington, Frank Walsh, and others ; more critical speeches by John Boland, long a Nationalist member in the London Parliament, and James O'Mara, Lord Mayor of Limerick. The day before they had both joined me in exultation, but now I noticed a cooler tone. Still, joy and gladness prevailed until the banquet hall began to look deserted.

Then, as we came away under the stars, some one whispered that a telegram had been received : "Renounce Treaty, De Valera." It was a lightning stroke, killing all our joy, and

destined to set Ireland again in flame, but not to renew my own country's long centuries of disgrace.

NOTE.—In summary the terms of the Treaty ran : (1) The Irish Free State was to have the same constitutional status in the British Empire as the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa.

(2) Members of its Parliament were to swear true faith and allegiance to its constitution and to be faithful to the King in virtue of the common citizenship with Great Britain and membership of the group of nations forming the British Commonwealth of Nations.

(3) British Imperial forces should undertake Ireland's coastal defence until the Free State could undertake it herself. And six points around the coast were to be free of use for the Imperial forces in peace or war. (4) The Free State should establish a military defence force having the same proportion to the British army as the population of Ireland bore to the population of Great Britain. (5) Free access to ports between the two countries. (6) The boundary between the Free State and Northern Ireland was to be adjudged by a commission of three—one for each division, and a chairman by the British Government.

## CHAPTER VIII

### “ SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY ”

*“ Come Muse migrate from Greece and Ionia,  
Cross out please those immensely overpaid accounts,  
That matter of Troy and Achilles’ wrath, and Atneas’, Odysseus’ wanderings,  
Placard ‘Removed’ and ‘To Let’ on the rocks of your snowy Parnassus,  
Repeat at Jerusalem, place the notice high on Jaffa’s gate and on Mount  
Moriah,  
The same on the walls of your German, French and Spanish castles, and  
Italian collections,  
For know a better, fresher, busier sphere, a wide, untried domain awaits,  
demands you.”*

WALT WHITMAN : “ Song of the Exposition,” 2.

I MUST go back a few months to make my two visits to the United States hang together. For in the Spring of 1920, on the strength of a welcome presentation contributed by imaginative men and women as reward for imaginary services, I resolved to discover America, a country of which I was as ignorant as Columbus before he started. What sedentary person can imagine, what traveller forget, the first vision of that discovery ? Gliding up the still waters of an estuary, passing the considerable Statue of Liberty, securely founded, it is said, upon a gaol, the traveller beholds suddenly revealed to him a dream-like city of romance, unequalled for grandeur by any covert that man has yet designed as a shelter against the wind and rain. Buildings, grouped beside buildings, rise to irregular but amazing height. They rise in all the beauty of simplicity, straight, and hardly touched by the defiling hand of ornament. It is a marvel that they could so stand. And from the midst of the solemn group rises a vast tower, higher than all the rest, and, as I approached I thought to myself : “ Surely it must be the Cathedral of this holy vision. For if there is any God to be worshipped in this dreamlike and

undiscovered country, He must needs be worshipped there.” But it was the Woolworth Building, a purely commercial edifice, financed on sixpenny goods, and decorated with pseudo-Gothic elaboration.

Sceptical satire would have been easy, but misplaced. For the next day I attended a meeting of the “Inter-church World Movement of North America” in the Hippodrome, which roughly corresponds to our Albert Hall. Thirty Protestant churches were there combined to Christianise the Earth, the Roman and Anglican (or Episcopalian) Churches alone standing aloof from the commendable enterprise. The Thirty included 15,000,000 of America’s Protestants, and their object was “to compel people to see the Program of Christ.” For this purpose they proposed to raise about £70,000,000 (at par) within five years, “so as to expand and standardise Christianity.” The exact sum in millions of dollars ended with the figure “72,” and I could not but appreciate the accuracy of that “2” (say eight shillings at par) in so vast a scheme.

A large advertisement announced the meeting with the words : “Faith ! Hard-headed Business Men are agreed that Faith is needed under present Conditions,” and, knowing that a good deal was needed, I went ; all the more willingly because Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jun., was going to speak, and I had heard of him as a young man trying, with earnest solicitude, to pass a camel through the eye of a needle.

The large audience overflowed on to the stage, but room was kept for four tall young women, dressed in old-fashioned white nightgowns, reaching to their feet, so that they looked for all the world like angels who had lost their wings. At three o’clock they rose simultaneously, set cavalry trumpets to their lips, and led the audience in the familiar hymn, “Hold the fort, for I am coming,” the words of which were thrown upon a lantern screen line by line. When for the last time we had flashed the answer back to heaven, the four wingless angels played us “The Lost

Chord" in unison twice through on their trumpets, and young Mr. Rockefeller, after reading a chapter from the incomprehensible Revelation of St. John, was introduced by the Minister of the Brick Presbyterian Church as "one who had caught a vision of the Movement with his accustomed clarity of judgment"—the same clarity, I supposed, as he displayed as heir to the great Trust, Combine, Syndicate, or "Octopus" which enabled him to contribute largely to the World Fund for the promulgation of Christianity.

A type-written copy of his speech was handed to me before he began, and so I was able to follow precisely his statement that the world was seeking some solution of the great problems pressing upon it, and I heartily agreed. Force, he said, had been tried, and it had ended in ruin. Individualism had been tried, and it had ended in the selfishness, the self-seeking, the thoughtlessness of the masses. And not only of the masses, I silently suggested.

"So now," Mr. Rockefeller continued, "we are hearing leaders in the business world saying that the Golden Rule must be introduced into business, and that only would solve the problems of industrial life. We were coming to realise that, after all, the solution was to be nothing new but the re-introduction into our hearts and lives of the spirit and the life of the simple Carpenter of Nazareth."

Yes, I thought, that doctrine seemed simple and familiar. If it had been rather less familiar, it might have sounded a little dangerous at a time when all Radicals, Socialists, and Bolsheviks were being clapped into gaol as equally hostile to established society. But no one was questioning the blessing of Christianity, because no one dared to practise it. And so the next speaker went quietly on to show us diagrams proving how many millions in the world had never yet heard of Christ and the Thirty Churches. Then we all sang, "My country 'tis of thee, Sweet land of Liberty," to the tune of our National Anthem, each line being illustrated on the screen by a picture of American scenery,

domestic happiness, or symbolic statuary, and I realised the advantage that the Americans have in this respect. For how on a screen could we decently illustrate the lines, “Confound their politics ! Frustrate their knavish tricks ! ” As the final picture we were shown a lofty structure described as “a poet’s dream of the Church United—the Interchurch of the Movement,” and it was the very image of the Woolworth Building.

Soon afterwards May Day came to the sweet Land of Liberty, and it was a day of carefully prepared panic. Mr. Mitchell Palmer, the Attorney-General in Washington, had issued solemn warnings to the whole country. He saw Red Terror lurking in every hole. He smelt Bolshevik gold on every unwashed hand. Like our own Government in Ireland, he discovered a plot. He posted 11,000 policemen at strategic points throughout New York City. He stationed guards at the houses of the millionaires. All that prescience could devise was accomplished. May Day came, but no massacre. May Day went. Not a dog barked. Prescience was vindicated.

Guided by a Labour leader, I passed unperturbed from one workers’ meeting to another, progressing along the east side of the narrow peninsula of rock upon which the romantic city stands secure. Most of the halls were built for Jewish ceremonies, marriages, and other ancient rites. On one platform I found myself seated in an elaborately carved stall, like a bishop’s throne. But it was intended for a priest of a much older religion than the Christian, and many a Miriam and Jacob had plighted their troth before it. Zangwill once told me there were only about 12,000,000 Jews in all the world, but in that case surely there can be none outside New York. He placed his “Melting Pot” in that city itself, but it appeared to me that the graven image of Judah never melted. I saw many other races. The “Chinks” whom I had known so well, were smiling as they smile all round the world. Dark-eyed Italians were tricking out their little girls in white muslin for the First



THE STATUE OF LIBERTY  
From a painting by C. R. W. Nevinson



Communion, and bitterly lamenting the Prohibition that dried the kindly flow of their familiar red wine. I had heard there were 25,000,000 people in the States who could hardly understand the American language, and at every corner I saw newspapers printed in German, Greek, Czecho-Slovakian, Polish, and other results of Babel. Yet, wherever I went were Jews, Jews, Jews, and the orators at all the meetings spoke in that mixture of German, Hebrew, and other tongues that carries Jews through every market.

The audiences were furniture-makers, tailors (the great majority) and "white-goods" makers (chiefly girls). The demands were the demands of the working people everywhere—"The profit of the work for those who make it;" "the control of the industry by those who understand it;" and, of course, denunciation of Capitalism as the common enemy of mankind. But one heard also the claim to the finer sides and interests of life—to life more abundant, and to "All the best of life for those who create the means." These workers were living in dull red-brick or dull brown-stone houses of five or six stories, such as characterised New York before the genius of McKim and his followers transformed it into beauty. Down the fronts run spidery iron staircases for fire-escapes, adding to the untidy scrappiness of the streets, which the children use as their only playground. But prosperity was then fairly general, and though prices were rising rapidly, wages rose rather quicker. I was told that a good workman could make as much as £15 or even more in purchasing value; and an average girl from £8 to £10 a week. On the surface, conditions looked better than in our East End. The men seemed better fed, the girls better dressed. But there was no legal drink, and that made some difference.

The most reactionary paper in the city had informed us that morning that "the mad dog of internationalism was frothing at the mouth." The mouth was there, but it refused to froth. In New York, and indeed all through the States, I was struck by a peculiar absence of indignation. The

country is too vast for the concentration of wide-spread rage. There is no gathering point for indignant protest like our Hyde Park or Trafalgar Square. General prosperity was partly the cause, for no prosperous being wishes to make a disturbance. But the Americans seemed to me leisurely, acquiescent, patient, obedient—not a “fierce people,” as Burke called the English. They submit quietly to the injustice of authority—to what their own Walt Whitman called “the never-ending audacity of elected persons.” It so happened that on that very May Day a courageous young girl of twenty, Mollie Steimer, was being transferred to the gaol in which she was condemned to spend fifteen years. For murder? No such thing! For having shared in the crime of issuing a pamphlet protesting against the use of American troops in any invasion of Russia. She and three men were thus sentenced under the Espionage Act, our D.O.R.A.’s uglier sister, and of the nine judges in the Supreme Court at Washington only two—of course, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes and Justice Brandeis—had refused to support the abomination. Otherwise one felt hardly a ripple of protest. The country was too large. What did San Francisco care about Mollie Steimer? And the people were too patient, too obedient, too standardised to rise in fierce indignation such as would have rocked an English Government.

I need not speak of American hospitality. Every Englishman knows it is overwhelming, not only in luncheons, banquets, and prolonged motor-drives, but in politeness and sympathetic understanding. I went about among the people of all classes, as an utterly unknown foreigner, speaking their language with a distinctly foreign accent, and by all classes—journalists, financiers, politicians, and working men—

was received with invariable courtesy and apparent pleasure. One would have thought everyone had been waiting all his life just for the opportunity of doing me a service, if only by showing me the way. In our own country we never say, “Glad to meet you, sir!” and we seldom

are glad. But the American's genial manner of saying it, and even feeling it—how charming after the English or Scottish sullen assumption that every stranger is probably an enemy and certainly a bore ! Unhappily, it would be unwise to pursue this delightful theme, for when I first wrote with high appreciation of this American charm, one of the leading papers in the Eastern States resented my commendations with American humour.<sup>1</sup>

For fear of again rousing hostility by commendation, I will now only add that the readiness to help, to be of service, to consider one's feelings and make things easy is widespread. Even officials are polite, and appear to think that they are there to give assistance instead of putting every hindrance in one's way. To pass into the Government offices of Whitehall from the common streets of New York or Washington is like passing from humanity into a wilderness of snarling chimpanzees. This pleasing courtesy was to me all the more unexpected because the American children whom I happened to meet usually displayed the characteristics that we associate with old age—querulousness, greed, self-absorption, and physical timidity. But as they grow up they shake off these senile qualities and develop into men and women singularly simple-hearted, high-spirited,

<sup>1</sup> I may extract a few epithets from this attractive specimen of American journalism : " H. W. N., priceless old dear, and writer chap on the *Manchester (England) Guardian*, has returned to the jolly old home after a ramble through the American provinces, astounded really, and his heavy old expectations crushed no end, at what he found over here.

"The darling old spiffer came across looking for American manners, dashed queer mission when one comes to think about it ! Fancy Americans having manners !—But Nevvy, old toodle-oo, always was a deucedly queer chappy, up to no end of impossible tasks. Regular egg, old Nevvy ! "

After quoting some of my observations on the differences of pronunciation ("scribbles old omelette"), the humourist continues : "Fancy persons making such mistakes ! Jolly decent old linguist, old Nevvy ! Understands everything ; perfect wonder !"—"A marvel old Nevvy ! Picks things up in a blinking instant ! Nothing escapes his jolly old eagle-eye ! All egg, nothing less !" And so, after various quotations from my laudatory article, the high-spirited critic ends with "Fancy ! What !" His criticism appeared in *The Brooklyn Eagle* of August 1st 1920. No wonder *The Brooklyn Eagle* is accounted among the foremost papers in the United States.

anxious to please others, and pleased with any fortune that may befall themselves. It is a blessed transformation, and perhaps it may be really better in the end, however unpleasant, to allow children to bark, bite, and be as disagreeable as nature made them, in the hope that so they may purge away their unamiable dispositions before maturity.

But critics all told me that the people remained “ crude,” and I suppose that was true. On Sundays, for instance, the great majority of men and women browsed upon “ printed matter ” that English children would reject as mental hog-wash. Perhaps editors are so terrified of the advertisers that they dare not admit anything outside the limits of “ standardised material.” The people themselves will swallow anything but the unexpected. They tamely accept a rhetoric at which even our most flamboyant patriots would laugh. For instance, a leading article in one of the greatest New York papers denounced “ the fraudulent slogan of politicians who wanted the Nation’s eternal obligation to our splendid young manhood which throttled the German shock troops in their tracks to be paid off in paltry dollars bills.” The writer continued :

“ Our battalions of youth, courage, and daring never went to the front for Hessian hire. Their services never can be appraised as cloth is measured with a yardstick, or even as fine gold is weighed on a balancing scale. If we are to continue as the nation for which millions offered, and thousands gave their lives, the account will stand, and stand proudly, till Gabriel blows his trump.”

And all because somebody proposed a bonus for the ex-soldiers in the war ! Similarly the advertisements sought to allure the uncritical mind by assuming the tone of what is there called “ deep stuff.” A paper that was printing two million copies a week contained a whole page headed “ The Truth that embodies all Truth,” and after a philosophic discourse upon the meaning of Truth, the page concluded with the words, “ This is the Truth that embodies all Truth ;

this is the Truth that makes men free." I looked for a reference to the New Testament, but tucked away in a corner I found an advertisement for a Motor-Car Company.

The confusion of mind that arises from want of criticism in religious matters would be incredible if it were not illustrated by the instances that Sinclair Lewis has crowded together in his "Elmer Gantry." I found the same readiness to swallow everything that came to hand in literature and political discussions, too. "Discussion" is hardly the word, for though I was courteously invited to lecture at many of the Clubs and famous Universities in the Eastern States, my chief difficulty was to induce discussion or even have questions put at the end, though I insisted on the obvious truth that no lecture is of any value without discussion. As is well known, men and women listen to far more lectures in the United States and Canada than anywhere else in the world, and they listen with great patience. Speaking in England, I had been accustomed, like other people, to cries of "Question!" loud dissent, and violent interruption, followed by the criticism of cross-questioning and debate. But in America the audiences sat silent, drinking it all in, as though it were the familiar Gospel or music flowing through the channel of their ears. No interruption, no violence, and at the end it was only by persistent appeal that I could get a question or two asked. Yet I certainly had not avoided matters of controversy, and probably had committed many errors of judgment and fact. I have listened in New York to a lecture so crammed with nonsense and ignorant mistakes that one might have expected the very walls to cry out. Yet the audience sat patient as sheep. They lapped it up, and left the hall to forget it all outside.

This silent and unquestioning endurance seemed to me another result of American obedience to authority. Perhaps, I thought, obedience comes from the rigid habits inculcated by those depressing Pilgrim Fathers. Perhaps from the bygone habit of negro slavery, and the continued presence

of millions from whom obedience is still expected. Perhaps from the large intermixture of other races who inherit little of our fierce temper, and have been for centuries accustomed to endure domination. Perhaps from the general fear of change—the fear that preserves a doctrinaire and obsolete Constitution as the Ark of the Covenant, the Heaven-sent Tables of the Law. It is American obedience that prompts the interminable patience of the people waiting in queues ; the submission to the police and the signals in traffic, so that even a suicide will obey rather than run any risk, and when I wanted to cross a crowded street my neighbours would drag me back as though they had caught a murderer. In the Central Park of New York there is a large expanse of good grass among the outcropping rocks, but I never saw man, woman, or child venture to walk on it, still less to sprawl as is the Londoner's way. In a Pullman train one sometimes discovers a smoking carriage at the end ; but if not, no one thinks of smoking except in the lavatory provided for men upon each car, and in the morning crammed to suffocation with passengers washing and dressing as well as smoking. At that time no woman might smoke upon a train, and even in restaurants and steamers a woman who smoked was insulted, as, to judge from Miss Maude Royden's experience in 1928, she apparently still may be.

Far worse, it is this habitual obedience that persuades the people to endure the Secret Police, the avowed employment by Government of the reptiles officially called “under-cover agents” (or “stool pigeons” by their deluded victims) ; the atrocious system of keeping prisoners “incommunicado” before trial ; and the unspeakable abominations of the Third Degree. To submission under these atrocities at the hands of the State the habit of obedience and the fear of change had quite reconciled that sweet land of liberty.

But rather than generalise upon a foreign country—always so dangerous a task, and the more difficult the more one knows—let me describe a few characteristic and pleasing

scenes. It is rather unfortunate that in every great or famous city—even in Rome and Athens—my first desire is to escape into the country around it, and imagine what nature there was like before the city rose. I did not find the citizens of New York particularly anxious to accompany me upon these little excursions. Perhaps they aimed at something more extensive, and certainly they had room for extension. Think what it must mean for youth—for male and feminine youth—to be able, almost at any season, taking stick and rucksack, to “hike” away from the city for hundreds or thousands of miles across their own continent, and all within range of their own language; to seek out “pockets” of untouched settlers from our English Borderland of two hundred years ago, hidden in the Appalachian mountains, as Cecil Sharp found them; to walk into the warm South and converse with soft-tongued negroes; to walk into the West and live with the last of the Indians, such craftsmen, such artists, such poets; to walk into the North and find bears and moose and lesser deer at home; to live in a land where humming birds and egrets are still to be seen nesting and flying, and not putrefying on the heads of barbarous females; to climb unknown peaks in the Rockies, and over the hills and far away to stare at the Pacific!

But for want of time I could not pursue those delights, and I found few pursuing them. Even on the railways, all Americans travel by night. It must be in order to avoid the advertisements that line the railroads. One would suffer much to escape those huge boards adjuring you to eat Gorton’s codfish (“No Bones!”) or to try one bottle of the Three-in-One-Oil, or to “Watch Him Register” his pleasure in a cigarette, or to sleep with innocence in the “Faultless Nightgown.” But in the effort to escape one does suffer much. When welcome night has blotted out the advertisements, the travellers have to creep into little coverts, set in rows one above the other all along the length of the carriages, and shut off by heavy green curtains.

To the top berths they climb by ladders, and to undress lying down in them requires acrobatic skill. Through the long night there they lie, stifling for want of air or blackened by dust and smuts that penetrate the ventilators. Heavily they sleep, or wakefully listen to the sorrows and wailings of a mother and baby above them or below, until in the dim morning a parti-coloured attendant gives notice of an approaching city, and it is time to crawl out, stumble up the carriage, colliding against male and feminine figures, and wash in the crowded cupboard at the end. After which the parti-coloured attendant brushes each traveller down with a little besom, as a last viaticum, and each gives him twenty-five cents (one shilling) for the service. To such conditions are reduced the members of a race that rather prides itself on sanity.

Yet everyone was astonished when, being invited to speak upon England at the M'Gill University in Montreal, I actually went there by daylight ! For no one could tell me anything about the country between great cities, and I began to doubt if America had any country except Niagara, a few chasms, and a “ park ” or two ; but a park can never be country. For the benefit of American citizens I may record that, escaping from the random suburbs, which extend as far as Dobb's Ferry up the Hudson, and are characterised, like South Africa, by scrap-heaps of old iron, barbed wire, empty meat-tins, and abandoned boots, I passed up the left bank of the river, which there looks about four times the width of the Thames at Richmond. And so we came to Albany, where the New York State Legislature had just been passing laws to extinguish the last spark of liberty, in the hope that these laws would then be vetoed by Governor “ Al ” Smith ; which also happened. For State Legislatures take a fond pleasure in passing laws with the confident expectation that someone or other will stop them on the way. After Albany we entered a green and pastoral country of low hills and running streams, something like the quieter parts of Shropshire. White farms were

scattered over it, and there was a good deal of plough and garden round them. As in Holland, the cattle were chiefly black and white, of the breed called "Holstein," valued for their milk. The farmhouses were built of planks laid lengthwise ("clapboard," pronounced "clabbud," as "record" is pronounced "reccud," and "concord" "conclud"). They had picturesque green shutters, as in France. Frequent spinneys, copses, and woods, supplied building material and fuel, the trees always thin and young.

As we advanced, the hills became higher, the streams more rapid, the country looking like the approaches to Switzerland or the foothills of the Jura. We had entered the beautiful State of Vermont, and those hills were the beginning of the Green Mountains. The trees here were chiefly fir, the streams almost torrents, the bridges roofed over with wood and covered in at the sides, like Swiss bridges. The chief industry was in timber, used, I supposed, as pulped into paper for the New York newspapers, only the writing and printing being afterwards required. The very air was sub-Alpine, abounding in the woodland smells that stir homesickness like a Swiss horn. Towards evening we skirted the shore of a long and beautiful lake, gradually extending to a width of many miles, and across it I could see far away the high outlines of the Adirondacks, still touched in May with snow. Beside the lake the plutocratic youth of New York, prompted by aspiration after barbarism, had established a Club where they might luxuriate in comfort and call it nature. For myself, as I looked across the water of Lake Champlain, I could but see visions of vanished races that once enjoyed the summer there, until the White Man's Burden fell and crushed them out. So in the early night I came to Montreal, and from a friend's high-placed house looked far into a deep blue distance across the orange lights that marked the city and the St. Lawrence. Further away still extended the unpeopled North, into which I longed to penetrate, but during my stay in Canada I could induce no one to accompany me. At that season the

devouring black mosquitoes were thirsting for the blood of an Englishman, and besides, two harmless travellers, anxious like me to behold the unpeopled world, had lately attempted to cross the wilds and were no more seen.

To many other Universities I was invited, and in all was welcomed with a cordiality unimaginable in dear old Oxford. Much I admired—the freedom of intercourse, the hardy athletics, the bold though vain attempts to break through the trammels of youthful conservatism. And in all I felt the repeated interest of those steel-clad chambers in which are guarded the purchased treasures of England—the first editions of Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, and so many besides, that our poverty consents to sell. But for my next scene, omitting the more famous seats of unexaggerated learning, let me rather speak of one among the most beautiful Universities of the world.

The horror of a night journey from New York was almost compensated for by the joy of emerging into the clear air of sunrise at the station of Ithaca. So Jonah must have felt when he emerged from the whale's belly into the light of day. On the summit of a high plateau above the town stands Cornell University, the buildings of the separate schools and residences arranged around a vast “Campus.” On either side the plateau is cleft by deep mountain gorges, down which torrents rush into the forty miles of lake far below. From the set of rooms allotted me in a luxuriously simple Guest House, I looked across a broad valley and the end of the lake to a green and cultivated hill-side that might have been in Gloucestershire. “As sure as God's in Gloucestershire,” says the proverb. South-west the wooded hills rose, line above line—ancient hills, showing no vestige of life in their rock, and leading away to the Alleghanies and Appalachians, the watershed of the Eastern States. On the grassy slopes around my “Telluride House” the lilacs were in full bloom, for the slow but certain Spring had come at last. Brown-breasted thrushes that early settlers fondly called “robins” were running over the neatly mown sward,

and brilliant yellow birds, shaped like willow-wrens but smaller, hopped among the branches of the pines and the trees called elms, though they are not the same elms as ours.

In the pure air and the quiet of that scene I felt like Marius the Epicurean in his House of Spiritual Purification.<sup>1</sup> Or was I really transported to that Abbey of Thélème for which I had always longed ? Up and down the grassy plots, the fields, the woods, and rocky dells, were moving fine young men and beautiful maidens, together or alone, untended, unconcerned, as in the age of innocence, or in that adorable Abbey of which it was written :

*"Grace, honour, praise, delight,  
Here sojourn day and night ;  
Sound bodies lined  
With a good minde  
Do here pursue with might  
Grace, honour, praise, delight."<sup>2</sup>*

In that Youth's Paradise young men and maidens were dwelling side by side in perfect freedom, all the arts, sciences and games being open to men and girls alike, though the girls did not then play baseball or football, and their numbers were limited to 1,000 out of a total of about 6,000. They were limited, I was told, because the men objected to being beaten by so many girls in the exams, and to feeling obliged to keep collars and language needlessly clean. In the dwelling-houses and "Fraternities" or Clubs, frequent dances were held, and during my first night in the "Teluride," young men in the Hall continued to turn round and round, closely embraced by girls, to the noise of negroid tunes, "till a silence fell with the waking bird, and a hush with the setting moon."

Round the "Campus" stood separate colleges or departments for Arts, History, Economics, Philosophy, Literature, and Languages (very few students learn Greek). Great buildings were devoted to Chemistry and Physics. On the

<sup>1</sup> "Marius the Epicurean," Chap. xiii, encl.

<sup>2</sup> Urquhart's Rabelais. Book I, chapter 54

north side of the plateau I was shown an Observatory, a school of Home Industries, and another of Plant Culture. Further away were the model dairy farms and poultry farms, where any student, man or maid, could pursue the mysteries of breeding and crossing whether for eggs or milk or beef—subjects entirely neglected in the Oxford of my time. All students had entry to a superb library where all the necessary books could be found, and where is gathered the finest collection in the world, as I suppose, of Dante and Petrarch literature and editions, besides a hideous series of original documents on witchcraft, witches, and heretics. One German manuscript, I think of the seventeenth century, consisted of successive notes taken down by an official onlooker during the gradually increasing tortures of a witch, and ending with the casual information that “at this point the woman died.” Such power for evil has religion possessed, as Lucretius said—religion combined with the cruelty of the only cruel animal. On the summit of the plateau stood a stadium for athletic contests, and near by an enormous drill-hall, lately erected at the expense of the State in “preparedness” for the next war.<sup>1</sup>

Soon afterwards I was present at a similar scene of salutary freedom when the “Intercollegiate Socialist Society” met at a lonely place called “Highlands,” some ten miles from Poughkeepsie (pronounced Pokipsy) on the Hudson. It is a region of wooded hills and a few cultivated fields, something like what Surrey was five centuries ago, and

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn, poet and critic, for many years a Professor on the Staff of a large University in the Middle West, has published a severe condemnation of the American Universities in general as promoting merely superficial knowledge without influence upon character or mind. In the chapter called “The Business of Education” (“Up Stream,” pages 151–176) he sums up his conclusions thus:—“Our people do not believe in education at all—if education means a liberation of the mind or a heightened consciousness of the historic culture of mankind. Philosophy and morals are taken care of by the Fifth Street Baptist Church. College is to fit you to do things—build bridges, cure diseases, teach French. It is not supposed to help you to be.” One could hardly imagine a more serious indictment of American life, but Mr. Lewisohn writes with the knowledge of full and grievous experience.

smelling like Surrey after rain. A school of various houses had been built there by the boys themselves, fitting visible logs and tree-trunks together, filled in with cement. Boys who gave up their holidays so as to gain a little more money for their schooling waited on us and washed up, but did not expose us to their cooking. It is common in American Universities and some schools for students to make up their fees by doing the so-called menial work, and sometimes even cooking. Relics of the custom remain in such colleges as Christ Church, where we scholars were bound to contribute towards the expenses of our learning, not, indeed, by cooking, but by saying Grace for the food that others had cooked. In America it sounded rather fine, but I doubt if the system is really advantageous. For the youths become so weary with their domestic work that they cannot learn much. Yet we must remember that cooking and washing-up and making beds are in themselves a mental and physical education, as Xenophon taught his wife. Indeed, if they were not educational, where would women be ?

Gathered at this forest home were 120 members of the Socialist Society, as in one of our old-fashioned Fabian Summer Schools. Nearly all were young. All but one belonged to the best-educated classes, and as a member of the Industrial Workers of the World ("I.W.W.") he had done so much for the cause and suffered such cruel persecution in consequence that no one noticed whether he was educated or not. At odd times we bathed in the lake, paddled airy canoes, played tennis, danced, and even walked. But in the mornings and evenings we assembled to listen to selected speakers, of whom Arthur Gleason was by far the best. At the beginning of the war I had known him and his beautiful wife at Furnes near Dunkirk, and had always recognised him as among the very best of economists ; but now he was soon to die. What struck me most even in a Socialist gathering was the amazing patience of an American audience. No exclamation, no contradiction, no interruption. All sat and drank it in as though their salvation

depended upon it, which frequently was not the case. Even at the end they were shy about asking questions, and I reflected what a Paradise America would be for Cabinet Ministers ! And yet American youths are not to be called shy. Something saves them from the unendurable curse of shyness. Perhaps it is the free association of young men and girls together. Perhaps the free permission to whine and wail in childhood.

This tendency to open-hearted equality I found promoted by other means than the Intercollegiate Socialist Society. Boarding a crowded steamer, I passed down the Hudson instead of up, and near the mouth made Coney Island, the New York People's Paradise. All my companions belonged to the Ruminant or Chewing Class, and worked their jaws incessantly round and round, with mouths half open, forty chewing like one, as cattle lazily ruminating in an English meadow. They did it to be doing something, just as Greeks twiddle their strings of beads, and English people play cards or whistle.

Along the island shores, men, women, and children swarmed in the most mixed bathing of the world. But all wore costumes, even the children, and the women were obliged to don the similitude of a skirt and stockings as well, though occasionally a Pilgrim Father might have detected a “semi-nude” leg if he had insisted upon prying. Under the piers, notices in American and Hebrew were posted : “Don’t disrobe on this beach or you will be arrested. This means YOU !” Patches of the Atlantic Ocean were fenced off with ropes and corks, within whose limits thousands were splashing and ducking with exaggerated security. Upon the edge, paddling children with spades and buckets snatched the brief moments of the highest human happiness. Those who had passed the age of unmilitated bliss joined the long lines of fishermen upon the pier, fishing through the sunshine hours, and never drawing up the ghost of a fish, except the bait they had purchased.

Or for more lively joys, they could buy a combination



AMERICANISM

From a drawing by C. R. W. Nevinson



ticket, admitting to precincts of various delight. Here they could mount (two together) upon horses fed on the Company's lightning, and rush at full speed over a mountainous course, lashing the electrified animals to drive them faster. They could rink, or shoot wooden duck, or play "skee-ball" (bowls with a jump in the middle) or jazz (at two cents the couple) to the music of a tinpot band. At choice, they could suffer all the tortures of Pope's disobedient Sylphs, and be whirled round and round upon a wheel, either horizontally or vertically. They could ride upon a giant bird that jerked them up and down in headlong flight. They could cross a moving bridge that now and again flung them high in air. They could pass through a revolving tunnel that made them stagger and sprawl. They could launch chairs upon the "Witching Waves" of hard but moving surface, and be tossed round and round or driven into violent collision with other mariners scattered upon the vasty whirlpool. They could experience all the motions and emotions of a sea voyage upon revolving swings that gently rose and fell like a rolling ship. They could expose their bodies to "The Whip"—an instrument that bore them quietly along till suddenly, at the click of a spring, they were whirled at lightning speed round a corner into space, and the best sailor among them would lose the points of the compass as he span. And all the scene re-echoed with the anguished shrieks of delicious apprehension as the Giant Switchback plunged its loads of victims to their doom. One escape there was. They might board the remote and peaceful barks that glided down the dim and mysterious "Tunnels of Love," where they were promised "a level ride: no ups and downs," contrary to the reputation of true love's course.

During these variegated experiences they could anywhere find support in "Clam Chowder," "Ice Cream," and "Hot Dog" (a long thin sausage, not really canine, inserted boiling hot into a roll of bread). They might drink almost every form of liquid, except what we call drink. Over one

switchback I read the inscription, “No intoxicated Person Admitted.” But it told of an age before Noah. Dionysus now was sold for medicine ; Falstaff required notes ; and drunkenness had again become a miracle.

Yet another scene of the democracy for which the world had lately been made safe by so many violent deaths. After a night of shocks and crashes because the train was too heavy to start, I entered the dismal station of Chicago through a series of dismal suburbs. A pamphlet called “If Christ came to Chicago,” by W. T. Stead, was once widely approved, but I thought if Christ came to Chicago when I did He would first have stopped the noise and then washed the city. Americans enjoy noise, for though they are a leisurely and unbusinesslike people, they think noise is evidence of hustle and vitality. In Chicago they cultivate noise at its best, for the city specially prides itself on a business reputation. It is cut to pieces by shrieking and roaring railways, on the flat and overhead. The trams or “trolleys” are the most noisy in the world, because they rouse the echoes of the elevated railways above them. Along the east side lies the cool and beautiful lake, then fringed with dustheaps and rubbish roads, which I am told have since been beautified. But in the centre, business reigned, and announced its conquest in shrieks and roars and dirt.

These characteristics may have been emphasised by the presence of the Convention assembled to select the Republican candidate for the Presidency. The head-quarters of the various candidates were in the big hotels, and one could not miss them, so large were their advertisements and so chaotic the crowds swarming at the entrances, shouting in the halls, and fighting for the lifts. By “fighting” I mean no more than pushing and mobbing, for, as I have noticed already, the Americans are good-tempered and inexhaustibly patient. The heat was considerable, never below 95 in the shade any day of the week, but I seldom heard one single damn, though in the two main hotels it was difficult to move

for the crush. One evening we had an enormous meeting in the huge Auditorium for Mr. Hiram Johnson of California, Progressive but not Radical, for "Radical" implies anything from the wildest Bolshevism to the mildest brew of our last century's Liberal opinion. For thirty-six minutes by the clock the stalwart little candidate, with features set in lines of superhuman resolution, stood in a Napoleonic attitude while the people cheered without a pause, incited to continuous enthusiasm by the antics of an athletic young man who directed their yells with the motions of Swedish drill. Such is the custom also at baseball and football matches in the Universities, partly to encourage the local side, partly to dishearten or "stampede" the opponents. At another meeting in the same hall, Mr. De Valera had to submit to similar evidence of popular favour, but as he did not reach the platform till after eleven at night, the cheering was deliberately limited to twenty-six minutes without a break.

But the two centres of interest were (1) the National Committee, where the wires were pulled, and (2) the Colliseum (so spelt), where the figures danced. I could not precisely discover who appointed the National Committee. Some said the members appointed each other; some that they were elected by delegates from the States. Strange as it must appear, I believe both were right. Anyhow, the Inner Committee of the National Committee was the hidden soul of the G.O.P., which is by some interpreted as Grand Old Party, by some as Gang of Politicians, by others as something unimaginably worse. It was within the secret places of that Inner Committee that the genuine selection of the Presidential candidate was made.

The Colliseum stood in a dismal street, half a mile from the rival hotels situated along the lake front. From one house opposite the six entrances hung flags of the Irish Republic—green, white, and gold. From the next house hung the flags of Women's Suffrage—purple, white, and gold. Along the front of the Colliseum itself the Suffragettes

were ranged, terrible with banners that asked : “Where is the Thirty-sixth State ? ” just one more State being required to secure the Federal Amendment under which all women could vote for the Presidential election in the following autumn, as ultimately was ordained. This method of picketing with flags was regarded by Americans as dangerously violent ; for American women, compared with our “Militants,” are a quiet and obedient people. But side by side with the Suffragettes stood a few other women demanding the release of political prisoners sentenced under the Espionage Act, such as Eugene Debs, the Socialist leader, who was slowly wearing out his ten years’ imprisonment for a crime that was an honour.

As to the scene inside the Colliseum itself, I hardly knew whether to compare it to a football match in which the winner does not win, or to a Portuguese bull-fight in which it is pre-arranged that no man or horse or bull shall be hurt, but one man shall get a prize. The hall was said to hold 15,000 people, about a third more than the Albert Hall. On the ground floor sat the delegates, arranged according to States, the name of each State being fixed on a pole above the allotted seats. The crowding reporters also sat on the ground floor, in front of the delegates. Two vast galleries ran entirely round the hall, filled with privileged spectators. The platform was also vast and privileged. In front of it projected a large circular stand, like the turret of a battleship, and on this the main body of the National Committee were seated. From the turret again projected a gangway roped on either side, and suggesting a quarter-deck. There was a little table at the end of it, and beside the table the chairman and the speaker stood to address the delegates. Here also, at the beginning of each meeting, a clergyman uttered a prayer for Divine guidance. To insure against Divine mistakes, a clergyman of a different denomination prayed each morning. An Episcopalian began, followed next day by a Cardinal in his scarlet robes, who was followed by a Presbyterian, a Baptist, and so on

by the various sects in turn till the days of nomination, and perhaps the denominations, were exhausted. Opposite the platform, and high up near the roof, was planted a large brass band to lead the National Anthem of the "Star-spangled Banner" that waves over "the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave." But as no one ever knows the words or the tune of that Anthem, other patriotic songs were hurriedly substituted, conducted from that quarter-deck by an athlete in shirt-sleeves, who also on occasion stimulated the prolonged cheering. The whole hall was thickly draped in festoons of the aforesaid banner, but no party colours were displayed. This, of course, did not prove that none was for the Party, but all were for the State.

On the first day, when an Episcopalian Bishop had prayed for guidance, and the Land of the Free had been celebrated in wavering song, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, a descendant of those fecund early explorers, but still better known as "Reservation Lodge," was appointed Chairman, and called upon to make the "Keynote Speech." This he did with a mixture of platitudes and attacks upon President Wilson, both eagerly applauded. As is well known, he was a worthy gentleman of literary proclivities, and throughout the meetings he kept bringing down his hammer upon the table with a decision that said, "That's another nail in Wilson's coffin!" Of course he dragged in Lincoln. Everybody dragged in Lincoln. Whenever there was a pause of an hour or two while the National Committee were re-arranging the wires, and the shirt-sleeved athlete could not induce the wearied delegates to sing another note about John Brown's soul, a veteran of eighty-six was always put up ("head erect, paunch well out," as the reporters said of him) to talk about Lincoln, who with his own great hand had once patted that ageing head.

When the "Keynote Speech" had at last been read to the full stop, the nominations began, their order, it was said, being arranged by lot. No candidate might speak on his own behalf, or even appear on the platform. Three or

four friends were selected to put his case, standing out upon the quarter-deck above described. For the first time in history, women were permitted to address the Convention, and as General Wood's lot jumped out first, a sister of Theodore Roosevelt was the first woman to speak to the delegates assembled. The speeches of all the women were good and brief, and it was a woman who won the applause of the week by proclaiming that her candidate had been born on Independence Day, the 4th of July.

But far more important than the claim of such qualifications was the extent of the cheering. At each nomination of a likely candidate, such as General Wood, Mr. Lowden, or Mr. Hiram Johnson, it was incumbent upon his supporters to prolong their cheering as a test of patriotic enthusiasm. If General Wood got cheers for twenty-six minutes, Mr. Lowden's cheers had to last for twenty-seven, and Mr. Johnson's must beat the “ reccud ” with twenty-eight. The directors of the candidates' supporters held their watches in their hands and with violent gestures encouraged the sweating delegates to renewed efforts till the former recorded time was surpassed. Processions were also formed to wind their way among the crowded seats with waving banners, yelling meantime. The object of these exertions was to “ stampede ” the Committee, but all was done in vain. In the silent watches of the night the Olympians of “ Big Business ” held their councils and worked their sovereign will.

When the cheering and nominations were over, the balloting began, the delegates shouting out their votes, State by State, in alphabetical order. The numbers of votes varied according to population, New York State having most (88), and some scantily populated States having only two. To be successful, a candidate had to secure at least a bare majority (481 votes), and until somebody won that majority, the balloting had to be repeated over and over again. The first five or six ballots showed little variety. It was evident that the popular choice of the delegates

themselves lay between Wood, Lowden, and Johnson. After the sixth ballot, Wood and Lowden ran a dead heat with 314½ each, and I said to a friend at my side, "I suppose they will decide for one or the other next time?" But he was Oswald Garrison Villard, courageous and unpopular editor of the New York *Nation*, experienced in the methods of democracy, and he answered, "None of the three has a chance. The Committee has determined to exclude them all. Wait for the 'break!'" And he was right. The reporters around me began shouting to each other, "Now the dirty work begins!" and in the succeeding ballots the votes for the leading candidates began to melt away like the Assyrians at the breath of the Lord. After ten or twelve ballots had been taken, it was found that all the while the hearts of the delegates had really been set upon a Senator Warren Gamaliel Harding of Ohio, proprietor of the *Marion Star*, as the best possible guide and guard for their great nation.

I was informed that this result was eminently satisfactory; that the sacred principles of Democracy were thus vindicated, and the ardent desire of the American nation happily attained. Of course I was ever so glad, though I am no longer sure that Mr. Harding's Presidency justified those comfortable expectations. But a simple stranger who, like myself, had strayed into a Convention might emerge from the tumult a little bewildered. He might even be driven to see some advantage in Monarchy. The creation of an hereditary King only costs one poor woman the pangs of childbirth. But think what the creation of a President every four years costs in noise and sweat and shouting and hotel bills and "slush funds" and oratory and platitude and intrigue and deception and bargaining and physical endurance! Nor did that one Convention settle the business. The Democrats had yet to meet in their Convention at San Francisco, and then came the voting for one of the two selected candidates throughout the country. But what was the difference in principle or policy between the two great

Parties over whom all this wealth and energy was expended ? There was none.

Thoroughly enjoyable as was Chicago with its Convention and my residence in Hull House by invitation of Miss Jane Addams, I enjoyed far more my drive from Boston to visit the quiet relics of Concord. There, lonely and desolate in a gloomy wood, stood Hawthorne's house, and desolate beside the road stood Louisa Alcott's. And there, beside the village green with its eighteenth-century church, stood Emerson's wooden dwelling, two-storied, white and green, the front windows boarded up because the American populace, in their zeal for the highest thought, kept smashing them to look inside. What strength and encouragement in my youth I had received from the idealistic but pellucid mind that once lived there, so rigorous in judgment, so obdurate against sentimentality and facile tradition ! A little way further on—only three or four miles away—I came to a scene more sacred and poignant still. For there, still deep in woods, lay the silent mirror of Walden Pond. The gipsy moth was slowly killing many of the trees, and some other plague was raising deadly blisters under the bark. But the circle of woods was still thick, silent, and untouched. The pool seemed to be about the size of Groby Pool in my own Charnwood Forest near Leicester ; the water calm and steely blue. A woodchuck came running to me down a pine, and I heard the “ oven-bird ” calling, and a few others whose notes I could not distinguish by name, as I could have distinguished them in England. There I sat long, for there was the place I had wished to visit more than any other in America. It was there that my friend Thoreau had lived, and there in loneliness had conceived the little book which to me is the most beautiful product that ever sprang from American soil, as he himself was the most beautiful and courageous nature. But I do him wrong to speak of his loneliness. Listen again to what he said :

“ I have a great deal of company in my house ; especially in the morning when nobody calls. Let me suggest a few

comparisons that some one may convey an idea of my situation. I am no more lonely than the loon in the pond that laughs so loud, or than Walden Pond itself. What company has that lonely lake, I pray ? And yet it has not the blue devils, but the blue angels in it, in the azure tint of its waters. The sun is alone, except in thick weather, when there sometimes appear to be two, but one is a mock sun . . . . I am no more lonely than the Mill Brook, or a weathercock, or the north star, or the south wind, or an April shower, or a January thaw, or the first spider in a new house.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Walden ; ” chapter on Solitude

## CHAPTER IX

### THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

*"To thee belongs the rural reign ;  
Thy cities shall with commerce shine ;  
All thine shall be the subject main,  
And every shore it washes thine !*

*"The Muses, still with Freedom found,  
Shall to thy happy coast repair ;  
Blest isle, with matchless beauty crowned,  
And manly hearts to guard the fair :—  
Rule, Britannia ! Britannia, rule the waves !  
Britons never shall be slaves !"*

JAMES THOMSON, c. 1740.

WHILE the negotiations for the Treaty with Ireland were still proceeding in London, as described in an earlier chapter (summer and autumn of 1921), I was sent by the *Manchester Guardian* as their special correspondent to the "Disarmament Conference" in Washington. That advanced and resolute member of the U.S. Senate, Mr. Borah of Idaho, had proposed the Conference early in the year for the three chief Naval Powers, and the newly elected President, Mr. Harding, on Mr. Borah's suggestion, had issued invitations to Great Britain and Japan, but had further included France and Italy for naval and military questions, and the Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, and China for discussion of the Far East and the Pacific. The Conference was invited to assemble in Washington on November 11th, and the Naval Powers were represented by the following delegates : Great Britain by Mr. Arthur Balfour (afterwards Lord Balfour), Lord Lee (First Lord of the Admiralty), Sir Auckland Geddes (Ambassador in Washington), Lord Beatty (First Sea Lord), and Lord Cavan (Commander-in-

Chief, from Aldershot); Canada, Australia, New Zealand and India were also represented, the last named by Srinivasa Sastri, who had succeeded his master Gokhale as First Member of "The Servants of India" in Poona; the United States by Mr. Charles Hughes, Secretary of State; Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Senator Underwood, leader of the Democratic Party; ex-Senator Elihu Root, aged authority on International Law; General Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of the American army during the war, and Rear-Admiral Coontz; Japan by Prince Tokugawa, Baron Shidehara, Admiral Kato, and General Tanake; France by M. Briand (Premier), M. Viviani, and M. Sarraut. For Italy, Signor Schanzer did good service; and for Portugal, Viscount Dalte. For China, Dr. Alfred Sze (Minister in Washington). Dr. Wellington Koo, a graduate of Columbia University and an eloquent politician, worked without pause, chiefly in opposition to the claims of Japan upon their country, though in the end the Conference was satisfied with giving China the advice: "Be good, sweet maid, and let Japan be clever"—advice which China has not succeeded in following.

On the voyage out, I had the advantage of accompanying my friend, Thomas B. Wells of "Harper's," and J. G. Hamilton, a Lancashire man, who had fought his way up from engineering works so as to become a very remarkable correspondent, chiefly for the *Manchester Guardian*, but then for the *Daily Chronicle*. His knowledge of Europe and of the Far East suited him admirably for the work in hand, though during the private discussions in which he delighted his forecast for our country was so gloomy that he would always begin with the ominous sentence, "England is doomed!" Among the many distinguished journalists who then gathered in Washington, I suppose the most celebrated were H. G. Wells (as great a journalist in his imaginative works as he is an imaginative writer in his journalism), who came out for the *Daily Mail*, but was rapidly transferred to the *Daily Express* owing to his

accurate accounts of the French opposition to British policy ; Wickham Steed and Mme Clemence Rose, redoubtable collaborators for *The Times* ; J. A. Spender, famous as the judicious editor of the *Westminster Gazette* while it was an evening paper, indispensable to all serious politicians in England but just then converted into a morning paper, from which he wisely hastened to resign after the appearance of the first number early in the Conference ; Maurice Lowe, resident for the *Morning Post* ; Colonel Repington, also for the *Morning Post*, with his terrifying note-book ; and Wilson Harris, who suddenly superseded P. W. Wilson, long the trusty servant of the *Daily News*, when the Conference was actually assembling for its first meeting in the hall. Among the French correspondents "Pertinax" (M. Geraud ?) of the *Echo de Paris* was perhaps the best known, though Philippe Millet of the *Petit Parisien* and M. Galtier of *Le Temps* were there. Among the crowds of Americans by far the best known to myself was Frank Simonds, so secure in knowledge, so shrewd in criticism, though at that time strongly pro-French and more than slightly anti-British. Nor must I forget Mark Sullivan, so wise, so quiet, whose home was a haven of peace to all who could enter it and escape the turmoil of secretive diplomacy.

My own telegrams to the *Manchester Guardian* were duplicated for those two excellent papers, the *New York World* and the *Baltimore Sun*, and so I became acquainted with many among the best American journalists, besides the distinguished writers on the New York weeklies, the *Nation* and the *New Republic*. If all the Powers represented at the Conference had been as friendly as the correspondents were, the delegates might have gone home after their first dinner. Every kind of untiring assistance was given me personally, not only by my colleagues, but by the telegraph clerks of the Western Union and the Marconi Wireless, though I usually plagued them with more than 1,000 words a day, and on some occasions with more than 3,000 words ; all written in fearful haste. For, owing to the idiosyncrasy

of the earth in turning eastward round the sun, London is illuminated by day and darkened by night about five hours earlier than Washington, and to get my "stuff" into Fleet Street and thence to Manchester in time for the next morning's issue, I had to send it by three in the afternoon at latest. When a "Plenary Session" of the Conference did not end till half-past one, that meant rapid action for all concerned.

For myself, I always succeeded in obtaining amusement, and sometimes instruction, by attending the assemblies of my fellow journalists, all eager for information. In the United States the journalist is held in no contempt, and the highest "personages" in the country are willing not merely to regard him as an inevitable nuisance, but even to assist his humble endeavours to arrive at the truth. On one and sometimes two afternoons a week, President Harding received us in a large circular chamber of the White House, and would consider questions already written down, or even oral. The written questions he would pile together and answer in turn, his answer being sometimes explicit, but usually vague and mumbled almost unintelligibly, dying away in a low and inarticulate growl, like the Duke's conversation in Chesterton's play of "Magic." He seemed to me a man of no great intelligence, but in his public pronouncements, both at the Conference and in Congress, I recognised a master of platitude and a creator of serviceable words, such as "normalcy," "involvements," and "mutuality," that have passed into the American language. I am not sure whether he created "parity" and "global" also, but it seems probable, and their infection was painfully obvious in the later and less successful Naval Conference at Geneva in 1927.

Far more instructive were the meetings generously held almost every afternoon by Mr. Charles Hughes, Secretary of State, in the rooms of the hideous "State, War, and Navy Building." He would appear among the crowd of us who stood in a semicircle around, and exposed him to a

running fire of questions, often unanswerable. There was an admirable and dignified straightforwardness about the man, and my own questions were always received with patient attention, though numerous and embarrassing. But towards the end of the interview one would hear a distinct and rather high-pitched voice issuing from some invisible quarter, and then I knew there would be trouble. For Frank Simonds had entered the arena, and he never entered but to kill.

As I have used the word "arena" I may recall another scene still more akin to a cruel sport. In courteous emulation of the President, Mr. Balfour once agreed, I am sure much against his will, to receive the correspondents in the large hall of the British Embassy. We all sat around in excited crowds as in an amphitheatre, and presently Mr. Balfour advanced into the arena, attended by Sir Auckland Geddes as guide or keeper. After a few words conceived and delivered with his irresistible tact and charm, he asked if anyone wished to have any point made clear, so far as clearness lay in his power. At once the darts began to fall from every side, and Mr. Balfour turned this way and that to receive them. Two may be remembered as characteristic : first, "What's the reaction of the British Navy to the ratio of equality ?" I suppose Mr. Balfour had not then learnt the meaning of "reaction" in the American tongue, as implying little more than "opinion"; or perhaps the question was too far-reaching, for he adroitly evaded an answer. Still more perplexing was the question : "Say, Lord Balfour, what's the population of the British Empire ?" Like the boy in Calverley's poem, Mr. Balfour smiled and looked politely round to catch a casual suggestion, but made no effort to propound any solution of the question. He was led away, and the tormenting experience was never repeated.

Most amusing of these meetings, and also most instructive, were our assemblies twice every day to listen to Lord Riddell. He represented the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, but

no one knew how he came to be in Washington. He was not the official "publicity" organ. The Foreign Office had sent out Sir Arthur Willert for that purpose, and he carried out his duties with British reticence. But there was no anxious reserve about Lord Riddell. He held his receptions in a large room of the "Temporary Naval Building," and the room was always crowded. He had not always anything to tell us, for all the Conference meetings, except the "Plenaries," were held in secret; but he lived in the same hotel with most of the British delegates, and a good deal leaked out at their breakfast tables, probably with intention. I think that none of our most celebrated correspondents—Wells, Wickham Steed, or Colonel Repington—ever imbibed "Riddell's dope," though Alfred Spender sometimes came. But it was worth while to go. For instance, once when I was busily writing against time, I thought I might cut the morning reception, but just that morning Lord Riddell gave out a startling rumour about the French demands. Hamilton, with his usual generosity, brought the rumour to me, and together we rushed round for confirmation to Mr. Balfour's private house which we found him just entering with Sir Maurice Hankey, British Secretary to the Conference. With unexampled effrontery, I made for Mr. Balfour. Sir Maurice tried to hurl me back. But at the moment, though I was fully clothed, he recognised me as one who had gone swimming with him in the Dardanelles, and that recollection guaranteed my respectability. Mr. Balfour, whose courtesy no discourtesy could ruffle, had stopped already to listen, and he answered our question with polished discretion. But by missing "Riddell's dope" I nearly "got left," as journalists say, and only shamelessness saved me.

Lord Riddell himself, like Lewis Carroll's Father William, had studied the law in his youth, and the study had given him the detached and indifferent manner that the legal mind adopts. To this was added the slightly cynical insight into human nature which had contributed to the lucrative

success of his weekly paper, the *News of the World*. For he had perceived that the vast majority of men and women are more interested in the relations between men and women than in any other subject, especially on the Sabbath Day, when most English people have spacious leisure for contemplation of the theme. He was also a humorist, relishing humour in himself, and welcoming any touch of it in others. The particular interest of his paper had no immediate connection with Naval Reduction, and as I said, no one knew how he came to be there, unless his friend, Mr. Lloyd George, had sent him to hold the fort because he was not coming. But when, just before the end of the Conference, Lord Riddell was obliged to forsake us, and I, as the senior correspondent, rose to thank him for his prolonged service, I was right in saying that his departure eclipsed the gaiety of international relations.

The actual Conference was preceded by a day of mourning over the burial of an "Unknown Hero," whose poor bones had been brought across the ocean from France. They were deposited with great ceremony in the beautiful military cemetery on the height above Washington called Arlington, where Robert E. Lee dwelt before he joined the Southern Army in the Civil War. I then noticed some interesting points in a patriotic interment that has now become almost commonplace. At the very end of the long military and official procession I saw a simple carriage in which was seated ex-President Woodrow Wilson, who three years before had held the world in his hand, and now was hardly rational and of no account, though cheered by a kindly populace. On the top row of the amphitheatre, facing the stage of classic marble, I sat next to H. G. Wells, and reflected how far the greatest intellect in all that swarming throng was possessed by the short, rather ordinary, and quite unnoticed figure beside me. Then after all the platitudinous rhetoric, magnified and widely distributed by vast "amplifiers," I enjoyed like music the silence of Lord Beatty as he laid a cross—I think the Victoria Cross—on the unknown

bones, and the brevity of Lord Cavan, who said only "As unknown and yet well known ; as dying and behold he lives." But most significant of all to me was the presence of a small body of Veterans who had fought in the Civil War. Hoary-bearded and feeble they were, some still wearing the old blue cloaks and peaked caps that I had seen in ancient illustrations. There they stood, men who had known Sheridan and Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson and Ulysses Grant and Lincoln. And now after sixty years they had almost faded out, and so had the reasons for which they fought and saw thousands of their friends killed around them. That evening the public parks and buildings were brilliantly illuminated with sparkling stars, and stripes of coloured gleams, thrown upwards from the searchlights. The population paraded the walks and streets, shouting with astonished exultation at the artificial radiance, and a morning paper reported, "The Whole City was Drenched in Tears."

Next day, when the citizens had dried their eyes, the first Plenary Session of the Conference was held in the classic marble building known as the Hall of the Daughters of the Revolution. Senators, members of the House of Representatives, distinguished visitors, journalists, the American Advisory Committee (a well-intentioned but futile body, including old Mr. Gompers, who was called the Labour leader because he held the views of a moderate Liberal like Mr. Asquith), and the various delegations around a central square were duly arranged in suitable positions. The President entered, all standing, and read a long address, conceived in the most telling spirit of platitude, which was loudly applauded by the galleries. Some of his sentences are perhaps worth preserving for imitation on similar occasions :

After speaking of the war, he cried, " How can humanity justify or God forgive ? " (A terribly difficult question for theologians.)

" Officially, in the name of the United States, I say

we want less of armaments, and none of war." (An apt sentiment to secure Senator Borah's approval).

"It is but just to recognise varying needs and peculiar positions. Nothing can be accomplished in disregard of national apprehension." (A sop to M. Briand).

And finally : "We are met for a service to mankind. In all simplicity, in all honesty, and all honour there may be written here the avowals of a world conscience refined by the consuming fires of war, and made more sensitive by the anxious aftermath." (An example of confused rhetoric that nevertheless conveys some meaning).

When the President had withdrawn, Mr. Balfour proposed that Mr. Charles Hughes, as Secretary of State, should be elected Chairman. There was no opposition, and Mr. Hughes took his seat upon a facsimile of the chair in which the Declaration of Independence was signed. In passing, I may mention the amazing skill of the official interpreter, who after each speech repeated it immediately word for word in the opposite language, English or French, reproducing even the gestures and intonations of the speaker who had just sat down.

The Secretary of State's proposals had been carefully prepared, and I still believe their terms were then unknown to all the delegates, including the British. I have no reason to suppose that Mr. Balfour was lying when he said they were unknown. They were certainly astonishing. But far more astonishing to myself was their reception by the British delegates. All average Englishmen like myself had been cradled to the song "Rule, Britannia!" and educated reciting "Ye mariners of England ; Britannia needs no bulwarks. The meteor flag of England Shall still terrific burn!" and similar assertions of naval superiority. But here was a foreigner proposing an absolute equality in battleships with the flag that had braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze ! How, then, should Britannia rule the waves, while the stormy winds do blow ? Surely the spirits of our fathers would start from every wave at the mere rumour of such a dastardly suggestion ! Yet within

a few hours the British Naval Delegation issued the official judgment that Mr. Hughes's scheme was "bold and conceived in a statesmanlike spirit!"

Astonishment at Britannia's meekness was only increased when, three days later, Mr. Balfour rose at the second Plenary, and in forty brief minutes announced that the American proposals were accepted by the British Government, "not with cool approbation, but with full, loyal, and complete co-operation." "We have considered your scheme with admiration and approval," he calmly remarked, speaking almost without notes, and holding the lapels of his frock coat, unperturbed as though opening a flower-show; "we agree with its spirit and purpose as making the greatest reform ever carried out by courage and statesmanship." The depth of emotion hidden, as is happily the English way, beneath that cool and sceptical appearance, was for a moment revealed. The whole audience rose, cheering and clapping their hands as at a dramatic performance, and Mr. Balfour had won for England a position of favour and confidence that was never lost.

Admiral Kato rose next, speaking in Japanese and uttering sounds without a visible movement of his lips, as courtesy demands in the most refined circles of Japan. His countenance was like that of Buddha in meditation, the watchful eyes hardly seen through the narrow slit apertures, the cheeks sunken, the skin an ivory yellow. Thin, grave, and immobile he stood, more like a melancholy ascetic than a jolly jack-tar, and he murmured sounds that his own interpreter said implied a general approval, though with certain unnamed reservations. For Japanese skill in diplomacy lies in the art of saying yes and no at the same moment.

M. Briand spoke briefly, but reserved his great effort for the third Plenary, some days later (November 21st). Then indeed he poured upon the excited audience the full stream of Gallic rhetoric, shaking his fingers before his eyes, swinging his whole body to the cadence of his undulating periods,

and with both arms raised above his head appealing to the stars to witness the cruel wrongs that France had suffered. Perhaps all that gesticulation was necessary in addressing an audience delighting in rhetoric and understanding barely one word in a thousand of the language, but always inclined to applaud anything French in memory of Lafayette's services during the War of Independence. As the sections of the speech were in turn interpreted, the applause gradually diminished, for it was then understood that the orator, while expatiating upon the sufferings of his country, was violently denouncing both Germany and Russia for their supposed warlike designs against France and Poland. So imminent and threatening did these appear to him that France could not permit the smallest reduction of her armies. Germany might then suppose that France was "morally isolated," and in one swinging period after another M. Briand, as Premier of France, destroyed the clause in the Agenda of the Conference which had aimed at reduction of land forces.

It was noticed—it could not but be noticed—that though the orator praised and thanked the United States for assistance to France in her peril, he said not a single word of thanks or praise for England's help, which had preserved France from utter destruction at the first onset of the war. When the eloquent display was finished at last, Mr. Balfour quietly rose, expressed his admiration and sympathy, but "sorrowfully admitted that the speech was not conducive to a reduction of land armies." And he added, "If M. Briand's fears of moral isolation were realised, it would be a tragedy indeed. But if the cause of international liberty required from England—from England—a similar sacrifice as the last resistance to domination, or if our ally were similarly threatened, she would find the warmth of our sympathy had not grown cold." With that politely ironic supplement, Mr. Balfour allowed the obvious insult to pass.

The breach between England and France had been imminent even before the Washington Conference assembled,

but this was the first sign of it patent to the world. It was with difficulty that the French delegation could be induced to accept the position of a third-rate naval Power in battleships by submitting to the ratio of 1.75 (the same as Italy's) as against 5—5—3 for America, England, and Japan (all in hundred-thousand tons). Just because the Japanese "cried all over the carpet" to retain their fine new battleship, the *Mutsu*, the actual tonnage was slightly raised in each case, and the British were allowed to build two "post-Jutland" battleships, while the States kept the *Colorado* and the *Washington*. But when after M. Briand's departure for Paris, M. Sarraut claimed an equality with Japan, the claim was overruled by M. Briand himself by telegraph. For all the Powers equally the size of battleships was limited to 35,000 tons, the guns to 16-inch (the largest that could be fired from such ships). The size of cruisers was limited to 10,000 tons, with 8-inch guns, but, unhappily, their number and "global" tonnage were left undefined, whence the trouble that arose at the futile Geneva Conference that I attended in the summer of 1927. On that occasion, owing to her treatment in Washington, France was not represented, nor was Italy.

But the chief breach between the two former Allies grew out of the British proposal to abolish submarines. It was introduced by Lord Lee, and the debate lasted three days. Lord Lee maintained that the submarine had little success in the recent war except against merchant ships, of which the German submarines sank 12,000,000 tons, valued at £300,000,000, apart from the cargoes and the 20,000 non-combatant men, women, and children drowned. The submarine, he said, was an aggressive weapon, and not cheap as defensive; for though the Germans had an average of only nine or ten at sea at any one time, England had to keep 3,000 anti-submarine surface ships in action against them. England now possessed 100 submarines—the finest fleet in the world, but she would willingly scrap the lot and disband the trained crews if all other nations would do the

same. Mr. Balfour then placed upon record the following summary of the British delegation's views :

" That the use of submarines, whilst of small value for defensive purposes, leads inevitably to acts which are inconsistent with the laws of war and the dictates of humanity, and the delegation desire that united action should be taken by all nations to forbid their maintenance, construction, or employment."

The British arguments entirely won over Mr. Hughes, but as a compromise he proposed great reductions in submarine tonnage from the original amounts. The French, on the other hand, through Admiral le Bon and M. Sarraut, resolutely refused every concession or reduction below an equal maximum of 90,000 tons, and their persistent opposition drove Mr. Balfour, on one of the few occasions in his life, to blaze into a flame of righteous indignation. He showed that during the war England had employed 3,676 vessels of all kinds in keeping clear the sea communications for the Allies, as compared with 257 maintained by France, and 280 by Italy. Owing to our seafaring and fisher population we could protect ourselves from submarines far better than any other country, and would do it again if the proposed abolition were rejected :

" No other country in Europe has that population," he continued ; " No other country can provide that defence against submarines. It is not there. We had to provide for France and for Italy, and if the same circumstances came again we should again have to provide it. The fate of our own country I look to with serenity in this respect. I admit it may increase our difficulties ; I know it will increase our cost enormously, because we should have to organise all the auxiliary craft against it. But that it will imperil our security I do not believe.

" I do not know whether all my friends round this table can speak with equal confidence of their position."

As the French still remained obdurate, Mr. Balfour next day said that in case of another war with Germany such as M. Briand feared, France would again have to look to

England's seafaring population and her small ships for protection against submarines, and referring to the French demand for 90,000 tons, he added with indignant solemnity :

" How is that (the Anglo-French alliance) consistent with the building of this huge mass of submarines, which anybody who looked at the matter from the strictly strategical and tactical point of view would certainly say, from the very geographical position, was built against Great Britain ? "

Under rigid instructions from Paris the French delegates still insisted upon the full measure demanded, or 30,000 tons more than had been latterly proposed for America or England. On December 29th Mr. Balfour made his final protest against a demand which would greatly increase the navies instead of reducing them :

" We have, therefore," he said, " the melancholy spectacle of a Conference called for limitation resulting in a vast increase of the very weapon which most civilised elements in all civilised countries condemned. Such a fleet on the shores nearest to Great Britain would necessarily be a menace to her, and no limitation of any kind on auxiliary vessels capable of dealing with submarines could be admitted by the British Government."

So the painful discussion ended. France had lost the sympathy of many American friends ; had lost the reality of the British alliance ; and had irritated Italy, which now saw herself bound to build a fleet far beyond her means. Only Japan remained her friend, and that was mainly owing to a secret agreement in regard to Eastern Siberia.

I have dwelt especially upon this point in the prolonged divergence of diplomatic opinion between England and France, because Mr. Balfour in Washington, by his persistent efforts to secure the reduction of navies, won so much personal prestige among the American people and statesmen that when, in July, 1927, the Geneva Conference was on the point of collapse owing to the Americans' misunderstanding of our naval proposals, I suggested that Lord Balfour should be sent out as the only man who might save it even

in extremes. And I still think his position, experience, and popularity might have saved it from a disaster of which we were in 1928 to suffer serious results. At that Conference the representatives of our Admiralty again proposed the abolition of the submarine, but met with no response from America or Japan. Submarines remain, as M. Briand on leaving Washington had said of the French intention in building them, "to explore the flora and fauna of the deep."

As it was believed by some that the purpose of France in rejecting the British proposal in Washington was to induce England to guarantee her coasts in case of a renewed European war, I asked M. Sarraut myself if such a guarantee would change the French decision. But he scornfully flung away my note at the meeting of correspondents, refusing in the name of France to consider such a suggestion : "For France never required any assistance or defence beyond her own might by sea and land." I could have observed that such was not the general opinion in France between 1914 and 1918, but I said nothing, perceiving that the first object of French diplomacy at the Conference was to discredit the British delegation, and at the same time, by violent gestures, to assert the greatness of France, as a fading beauty wildly insists upon her remaining charms.

The delegates then proceeded to agree to certain resolutions, suggested by the Advisory Committee of well-intentioned men and women, and brought forward by Mr. Elihu Root, for the humane regulation of submarine warfare. In all cases the safety of neutrals, non-combatants, crews, and passengers upon any ship attacked by a submarine was to be first secured, and one resolution actually laid it down that the prohibition of submarines as commerce-destroyers should be accepted as part of the law of nations. Since it had been proved by the British, and admitted by the French, that the destruction of commerce was the main purpose of the submarine, the acceptance of this resolution was a sardonic jest. As to rules for promoting humanity in war, they are prompted only by holy simplicity, and are

invariably laughed to scorn when war comes. For war is not humane, and in wartime Hell is paved with good regulations.

Towards the end of the year (December 29th) I wrote :

" It will be understood that the action of France throughout has ruined the Conference, as I long ago feared was probable—ruined it in all but the one point of welcome significance. The Conference has put an end, one hopes for ever, to the danger of naval competition between America and England, lately so threatening, so likely to result in a terrible war. For that all of us may be thankful to the American Secretary of State, and especially to the American and British delegates, among whom Mr. Balfour has won the position of highest honour."

The lamentable failure of the Geneva Conference in 1927 appeared to obliterate even that one point of welcome significance. For the delegates on both sides (certainly on the American side) seemed to devote all their thinking to providing for a war that all declared "unthinkable." But still I am not without hope that the Washington Conference effected something more than the reduction of taxes for the supply of battleships, and I cannot agree with my friend Frank Simonds, who, in a book written with extraordinary wisdom, tolerance, and knowledge, regards the result of the Conference as actually disastrous. He writes throughout with a bias in favour of France, and with a certain tendency to credit suspicions then amusingly prevalent in Washington—suspicions that the Mephisto of British diplomacy was intent upon the seduction of America's blue-eyed innocence. But the ultimate cause of failure he attributes to Mr. Hughes's ignorance of European feeling—an ignorance that he compares to Woodrow Wilson's, entirely different as was his personality.

" Never for a single moment," he writes, " did Mr. Hughes stop to consider how a Frenchman might think because he was a Frenchman; what British interests must be because Britons represented them. No material element

was ignored, but all the moral values, all the imponderables, all the European circumstances were dismissed. Inside the Volstead territorial limit, examination was microscopic ; beyond, nothing was considered."<sup>1</sup>

By the action of France the reduction of land-forces was excluded even from consideration. By the action of France the submarine forces were actually increased. And by the action of France the settlement of Far Eastern questions was very nearly wrecked. As at the Hague Conference of 1907, a poor little delegation of Koreans came to Washington and went moping about in the vain attempt to induce the Conference to take pity on the wrongs that Korea suffered at the hands of Japan. Far more provocative and dangerous to the Conference as a whole were the delegates who had travelled at great expense and after long delays from the Siberian Eastern Republic, whose capital is Chitâ. They settled in one house of a remote street, and appeared to subsist chiefly on milk, if one might judge from the platoons of milk-bottles always ranged outside their door. They came to petition against the hideous persecution their people suffered also from the Japanese, and to demand the withdrawal of the invading troops. Finding that no one took the slightest notice of their complaints, they threatened a startling revelation. They submitted, first to myself, and afterwards to other correspondents, a mass of documentary evidence to prove that before coming to the Conference France and Japan had agreed to work together during the meetings, and in fact had concluded a definite arrangement. France was to attack the Bolshevik Government in Russia from the side of Eastern Siberia, and thereafter Japan was to dominate that province, both along the coast and in the interior. They presented me with two main documents, one dating from the January of 1920, arranging chiefly for the transport of Wrangel's army from Constantinople to the coast of Eastern Siberia, and the support of an invasion of Russia thence ; the other dating from September 1921,

<sup>1</sup> "How Europe made Peace without America," p. 197.

suggesting from the French side joint action with Japan at the Washington Conference, and foretelling the approaching collapse of the Soviet Government and a restoration of the Tsardom, for both of which results France counted upon Japanese assistance. A telegram dated September 2, 1921, from the Paris Foreign Office to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Tokio contained the paragraph :

“ America’s intention to secure for herself a place in Soviet Russia has been frustrated by our policy. Americans are therefore pushing the Eastern question so as to gain supremacy in the East. We must resist such efforts by all means, and the French Government hopes to have the help of the Japanese Government in that.”

The documents were long. I telegraphed their main substance only, and the message ran to over 3,000 words. But as I had been the first to obtain the documents from the Siberian delegates, I submitted them at once to the chief members of the British delegation.

It was New Year’s Day (1922), and a Sunday, so that Mr. Balfour, enjoying Sabbatarian repose, could not receive me. Lord Lee read the documents carefully, thought the summary of the Franco-Japanese “Treaty” probably a falsified version, and the rest sure to be repudiated, though probably genuine. Sir Auckland Geddes was very grave about them. “They will blow the Conference sky-high like a kite,” he said, but admitted he had long suspected some such agreement between France and Japan. Both he and Lord Lee thought the French delegates might welcome the opportunity for leaving the Conference rather than expose themselves to further suspicions and hostility. Lord Lee believed that Admiral le Bon already aimed at taking advantage of some such occasion to go.

Next day, as was to be expected, the French and Japanese declared the documents to be forgeries, and M. Sarraut, on behalf of the French, published an official statement addressed to Mr. Hughes, describing them as “gross fabrications.” But excitement prevailed. The best

American papers, such as the *Baltimore Sun*, the *New York World*, and the *New York Times*, contended that mere denial was insufficient, and thought that this evidence only confirmed previous indications of an *entente* agreed or intended between France and Japan upon the subject of Russia. I had another long conversation with M. Skvirsky, the leader of the Siberian delegation, who told me they had kept back the documents as long as possible, always hoping to be heard at the Conference, but had received no attention to their protests. They would receive attention now. "We believe that every word of the documents is true," he continued; "the best way for the Japanese to disprove them would be to evacuate Siberia. We cannot disclose the authority, but we obtained them in the same manner as other Governments obtain such things. The Japanese troops have been in the Far Eastern Republic now for three years, and are doing everything possible to prevent order from being restored, and to dismember the Republic. If we are not permitted to appear before the Conference, we shall send a formal protest and a memorandum setting forth the conditions in Siberia. The Powers who participated in the original intervention in our country guaranteed her integrity, and it is their moral duty to see that the Japanese army is withdrawn."

As I telegraphed at the time, that last sentence revealed the peculiar *naïveté* of the Siberian delegates; for a pledge to preserve the integrity of a country is the universal formula among Powers aiming at its dismemberment. I perceived a similar simplicity in a further demand that France and Japan should answer the charges specifically, as at a trial with a view to discovering the truth. The Powers were not likely to invite the delegates of a Republic not even recognised to bring France and Japan into the dock. They were naturally resolved that the Conference should not "be blown sky-high like a kite," and after various explosions of rage, including a suggestion that the Siberians should be exiled as "undesirables," the whole

subject was silently allowed to vanish away. None the less, something perhaps was gained. The Far Eastern Republic was ultimately absorbed into the Soviet Russian Republics, which was probably an advantage ; and if, as I believe, the Japanese armies were soon withdrawn, that was an advantage beyond question.

This Siberian incident only tended to increase the growing unpopularity of France in the States, and to obliterate the memory of Lafayette. It was fortunate that the second object of the Conference—the revision of the situation in the Eastern Pacific—was almost settled before the bombshell burst. That revision was a delicate matter, for in 1921 the ten years' alliance between England and Japan came to an end. To renew it would increase the irritation of the United States ; to refuse renewal might irritate Japan. It was a difficult dilemma. I still think that, as I wrote at the time, the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty was the most vital result of the Conference. For if that Treaty had been renewed, the United States would never have consented to a naval limitation. On the other hand the alliance with England had raised Japan to the rank of a first-class Power, and the Japanese were naturally unwilling to abandon the position.

After negotiations behind the scenes, while public opinion was kept interested in the study of the battleship ratio, the Four Power Treaty of Washington was evolved. Originally it was to be a Treaty between America, England, and Japan alone, but Mr. Hughes insisted upon the inclusion of France, chiefly to soothe the ruffled feelings of the French delegates. By a clever move Henry Cabot Lodge, leading Republican in the Senate, and chief adversary of President Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations, was put up to introduce the new Treaty at the Plenary Meeting of December 10th ; for there was always the danger that the Senate might reject the Treaty as too closely resembling the detested Covenant of the League. As became a cultured Bostonian, Mr. Lodge read an essay carefully written in elegant literary

style, and adorned with apt quotations from Byron, Browning, and Robert Louis Stevenson concerning the charms of Pacific and other islands where the waves lisp all manner of beautiful sentiments. But his chief object was to prove that the four articles of the Treaty contained no abhorrent suggestion of "sanctions" or force, such as defiled the Covenant. They ordained only gentle conferences between the four signatory Powers in case of disagreement among themselves or with any outside disturber of harmony.

The Americans around me loudly whispered "Bunk!" as comment upon these assurances, but such criticism was speedily drowned in the outburst of universal applause which greeted the fourth clause: "The Treaty between Great Britain and Japan shall be terminated." The heads of all the other delegations expressed approval—M. Viviani eloquent for France, Prince Tokugawa pregnant for Japan. But the chief cheering was reserved for Mr. Balfour, who spoke with the calm and hesitation of "the English gentleman"—a type still half-jestingly admired in the "Main Streets" of America. But he spoke also with an unusual touch of emotion and pathos, as one who was in the Ministry when the Japanese alliance was first concluded, and again when the *entente* with France began. "And all through my life," he added, "I have been a constant, ardent, and persistent advocate of intimate and friendly relations between the two great branches of the English-speaking race." That sentiment won the loudest and longest applause of a memorable day, in reality by far the most important and decisive day of the months during which the Conference lasted.

Unhappily, cultured Mr. Lodge forgot to explain whether or not the islands of Japan herself were included among the Pacific islands that were neither to be attacked nor fortified by the Four Signatory Powers. Mr. Secretary Hughes thought they were to be included. President Harding thought they were not. But when I suggested that there

seemed some contradiction between the two main authorities of his country, he merely mumbled that the matter was unimportant, and passed on. Unimportant whether Japan was not to be fortified, and whether the other three Powers were pledged to her defence in case of an attack upon her islands ! The mere suggestion roused violent hostility in the Senate. But on this occasion it was the President who was right, and Japan is not counted among the Pacific islands within the meaning of the Treaty.

As the size, guns, and collective tonnage of battleships, together with the size and guns of cruisers (though, unhappily, not the collective tonnage) had been settled by the Five Power Pact, and the defence of the Pacific islands above a certain latitude had been settled by the Four Power Pact, which also abrogated the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, I could not regard the Conference as an absolute failure. Something had been accomplished towards peace, and even China, though bidden, as I said, to be good and let Japan be clever, still, after Oriental delays and quibbles, did really recover Shantung from the Japanese, and Wei-hai-Wei as a free return of property from ourselves. Of the seven Treaties that President Harding announced to the Senate as requiring ratification (February 10, 1922), those were the only three that counted for much. The Treaty between the Five Powers as to the humane use of submarines and the entire disuse of poison gas was, from the start, utterly futile, as all such pretty plans to limit the horrors of war inevitably are. The three other Treaties were concerned with lesser details. So the Conference ended, after a slow process of petering out.

In spite of all my distracting business, life in Washington had its brief alleviations. The *Baltimore Sun*, that excellent paper, combined with the *Manchester Guardian* and the *New York World* to take my telegrams on the Conference, as I mentioned before. But my first personal connection with it was a festival given by its generous proprietors to all the correspondents who had come for the

Conference. This kind of festival is called a "Barbecue." When first I heard that name I thought it was some kind of animal, perhaps a porcupine. But I was wrong. One Sunday morning I found myself seated in a motor with four or five other journalists, rushing northward from Washington along a straight road, thirty similar motors in front of us, and thirty-one behind. Police upon motorcycles ran before us, or to and fro up and down the line, guiding and guarding this unprecedented procession of brains. Like an enormous snake, we passed with speed beyond the little District of Columbia, in which Washington stands, into the wide State of Maryland—"My Maryland!" as an old song used to run when men were killing each other there. It is a pleasant land, abounding in thin woods of thin trees, and scattered with little villages and isolated farms, nearly all the houses and barns being built of "clapboard" planks, like clipper ships. The fields are carelessly divided, if at all, and some are planted with maize or vegetables, some kept for the pasture of cattle, usually of the black-and-white Holstein breed, but a good many brown shorthorns. I saw no sheep, and there were few birds except starlings, and the large hawks (almost as big as eagles) which they call "kites." The ground has once been a tableland of reddish marl, with solid rock at no great depth, but age and water have worn it into undulating country with little valleys and streams running fairly fast, as in parts of Northern France. There are no hills, but at one point of the road I could see, far away, a blue mountain, inevitably called the Sugarloaf, from which both armies in the Civil War used to signal as they held it in turn. For the whole district is filled with memories of battles fought for a great but almost forgotten cause.

After about forty miles, our *cortège* reached an old estate surrounding a large house of solid stone, owned by the chief proprietor of the *Baltimore Sun*, who welcomed us, motor by motor, at the porch. At his side was ranged a row of Red Indians in all the romantic finery of eagle feathers,

wampum belts, and scarlet breeches. I did not observe tomahawks or scalps, but one Chieftain held a glorious Pipe of Peace, which he afterwards presented to our host, at the same time honouring him with the proud title of "Pretty Eagle." The Indians had come from North Dakota, chiefly to lay the symbol of victory upon the bier of that Unknown Hero at Arlington. But now each of the row, with immovable countenance, limply shook hands with each of us 300 journalists in turn. To be the Last of the Mohicans is not a happy lot.

Out in the open field a large trench-fire was blazing, fed by forest logs. And over the flames hung in chains a huge mass of roasting flesh, dropping odours, dropping fats. It was the Barbecue ! Not as I had fondly supposed a fretful porcupine, but all that was mortal of a gentle ox. From its charred and burning edges were suspended the corpses of rabbits that had not belonged to it in life, and a further warren of rabbits sizzled inside. From time to time, fragments, black and red, were hewn off the carcase and distributed among the guests, to be devoured in the fingers. That is the feast of Barbecue, a word of uncertain origin, possibly Indian, but more probably French, because the animal is roasted "from chin to tail." For those of us less accustomed to the forest primeval, platters of cold turkey and more familiar delights were plentifully supplied, with all the accompaniments of progressive civilisation except knives. In a neighbouring shed, another produce of progress flowed in similar profusion, rather excessive for some who had not advanced so far along the ringing grooves of time.

Around the feasting guests wandered at large a happy group of negroid singers summoned from Richmond, where they habitually met among themselves to recall the ancient songs of "Swanee River" and "Way down in Tennessee," such as ancestral slaves used to sing when their African music was forgotten. Then, upon a vast waving meadow, we beheld the kind of life habitual in the Wild and Woolly West, where gallant youths whirl the lissome lasso, and

gallant girls gallop upon every part of a horse but his back. So, as the sun declined, having like Homeric heroes sated our desire for meat and drink, we said farewell to the "Pretty Eagle," with hearty gratitude for his unimagined hospitality, and withdrew to the procession of cars again, leaving but few of our number (and those chiefly Japanese) "parked out," as it were, like stationary motors upon the comfortable maize straw of a booth, happy object-lessons in the value of Prohibition.

Another episode was different but equally pleasing. At the request of the "American Civil Liberties Union" in Washington, I sent a petition to Congress urging the clemency of an amnesty for offences committed during the war against the Espionage Act (our D.O.R.A.'s uglier sister, as before explained). After the apologies due from a foreigner, I wrote that I had heard there were still 145 persons imprisoned under the Act, some for ten and some for even twenty years, and this for the expression of opinions in opposition to war in general. In a following paragraph I continued :

"The right of free speech may perhaps be restricted of necessity in wartime. But such restrictions are among the most pernicious curses of war, and it seems to be the duty of every nation to remove them with all speed as soon as peace is concluded. In my own country all offenders under this head have long been released ; I think within a month or two of the Armistice. The same is true, I believe, of all other countries except the one country which I was brought up to regard as the very land of freedom. One of the most peculiar circumstances in the case is that the Espionage Act itself was suspended last March, and these political offenders continue in prison under a law which no longer exists."

My petition was read in the Senate (December 12, 1921) by Senator Ladd of North Dakota, and a copy was then sent to President Harding. I do not suppose that he was in the least influenced by the petition of a simple foreigner, but just a fortnight later he suddenly released twenty-three out of the 145 prisoners, and among them was Eugene Debs,

secretary and treasurer of the Union or Fraternity of Engine Drivers, and perhaps the best known Socialist in America, though not a member of the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World). He was sentenced for a speech delivered against the war at Canton, Ohio, and had served nearly three years of the ten imposed. A peculiar reason for his sentence was appended to the order for his release : "He is a man of much personal charm and impressive personality, which qualifications make him a dangerous man calculated to mislead the unthinking, and affording the excuse for those with criminal intent." I don't know who composed that puzzling description, but its moral was to avoid personal charm and impressive personality in America, if one favoured unpopular views.

The day after Christmas I was writing in the Cosmos Club when a telephone call told me that Eugene Debs was at the Department of Justice and "longed" to see me. Hastening round I met Debs just emerging from an interview with Mr. Daugherty, the Attorney-General, who afterwards did nothing to increase the credit of President Harding's Cabinet. I beheld a tall thin man of seventy or more, quite bald, with prominent hooked nose, deep-sunken grey eyes, the whole head like an animated skull ; hands remarkably large, with long loose fingers perpetually in motion, spread out wide or gathered together into a point at every sentence. He was dressed in the ludicrous regulation suit supplied to ex-convicts by the paternal State. Hearing who I was, he rushed upon me, and not observing my outstretched hand, flung both arms round my neck in a fraternal embrace. I endured as an Englishman may, but all the time I heard the click of cameras and the whirring of a cinema in action and I felt sure that "Eugene Debs salutes the *Manchester Guardian*" would be the "caption" to the film.

He invited me to meet him again in the bedroom of an hotel, and there I found that his endearing reception of myself had not been a peculiar honour. For one friend after another, beginning with Mr. Gompers, veteran leader of the

American Federation of Labour, kept crowding in, and he greeted all, men and women alike, with similar affectionate embraces, clinging long to their hands, in such joyful excitement as was natural after nearly three years of isolation in gaol. His was indeed a friendly and emotional nature, and I felt that he would gladly have taken all humanity to his bosom, including even the Attorney-General. For his heart was as bald as his head. Next day he started for his home in Terre Haute, Indiana, where he received the immense welcome he would so passionately have given to mankind, and, with still three or four years of life in front of him, he was thus rewarded for all that he had suffered in the noblest cause.

The amiable old man's enthusiasm for peace and fraternity stood in sharp contrast to the scientific labours of the "Chemical Warfare Corps," whose laboratories at Elmwood near Baltimore I had been invited to visit a short time earlier (November 30). At Elmwood the Government had acquired 10,000 acres of an uninhabited peninsula upon which safely to conduct experiments in poison gases, and chemists of the highest qualifications were continually there engaged in devising the surest possible means of killing men, women, and children in mass. As is well known, this desired result is obtained by fumes which either choke and burn internally or burn the outer surface of the body so that death supervenes upon comparatively brief anguish. After their discharge the gases will remain effective for days or even weeks together, thus rendering escape difficult even from such shelters as our Tubes, to which the inhabitants of London would naturally resort for refuge, as was possible in the Great War, when the efficacy of poison gas was still only partially developed. The mildest manufacture that I was shown was the familiar "tear gas," which perhaps I should hardly have noticed among its more serviceable associates, had not my eyes suddenly begun to weep copiously in passing the sheds where it was being elaborated. The varieties of death that can be induced from vats of salt and the resulting

chlorine and phosgene appeared to me, who am no chemist, very remarkable. Equally astonishing was the devotion of the mild-eyed chemists themselves, who declared their natures most humane, and the object of their persistent labours nothing more reprehensible than defence of their country. They showed me vials of gas, one or two of which, when dropped from an aeroplane, would reduce the population of London or any similar city to heaps of putrefying corpses. As the object was declared to be purely defensive, such an achievement seemed to me but another proof that the offensive is often the best defence. For British and European cities were the nearest upon which these defensive tactics could be tried, unless the United States aimed at the depopulation of Nicaragua or some South American country. But keenly interested as I was in these enthusiastic inventors of wholesale slaughter, even more admirable appeared the self-devotion of subordinate members on the staff who volunteered to enter the experimental chambers, where, in hermetically sealed glass cases, they were exposed to the full influence of poison gas of one sort or another, and carefully watched so as to estimate how long they could endure before life was extinct. It was a form of vivisection I had not realised before.

From time to time I enjoyed two other alleviations, more in keeping with the professed objects of the Conference. One came often, and the more often the better I was pleased. It was association with the two distinct and distinguished Judges of the Supreme Court in Washington—the Court of the nine judges, who have reached the highest position in the Law, and form the Court of Appeal mainly upon Constitutional questions, though their powers may be extended to criminal decisions not restricted to one of the States' jurisdiction. Justice Brandeis, whom I had met at the *Nation* lunches under Massingham, was one; the other was Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, son of the "Autocrat." As an almost invariable rule, the two acted together in support of national honour and justice, and when

they stood as a minority, they shared the usual merit and the usual fate of minorities. Of the two I became the better acquainted with Oliver Wendell Holmes, a noble type of American and human nature. As he showed me the places around the city where he had been two or three times wounded during the Civil War of the early 'sixties, he could not choose but be old even in 1922, and yet at the present time I hear he still retains his youthful mind and frame. Every day he then walked, erect and rapid, from his home not far from the White House up the hill to his duties at the Capitol, and at all times, alert and open-minded, he enjoyed converse upon any great subject, whether in politics, law, or literature. He was indeed an example in the art of growing old without degradation, and his ageing wife, keen, charitable, and always humorous, was an example equally fine. And I must not forget another veteran, Senator La Follette, so fearlessly aggressive for truth, so Ibsenish in appearance and manner, and so humorous a comedian in private life ; but to die so soon.

The second alleviation was supplied by the negro or "coloured" people, who in Washington have a quarter mainly reserved for themselves, and the large Howard University entirely devoted to their training, chiefly in Law and Medicine, which they practise among their own people. By invitation of their Professors, I visited the University two or three times, and what pleased me most there was the enthusiastic reception given by the whole body of the students to H. G. Wells, with whom I went to see one of their own plays. The moment he entered, they all rose to their feet, clapping their hands and shouting applause, partly in appreciation of a genius with whose work they were well acquainted, and partly in rather pathetic delight that so distinguished a man had actually come among them.

Similar delight, though for a different cause, was shown by other "coloured" people a few weeks later, when the Conference was fading to its end, and I was invited to visit Lexington (Virginia), by Colonel Kerlin, at that time

still teaching English at the Virginia Military Institute there. He was widely known as a friend of the negroes, and that alone was enough to condemn him, no matter how excellent his qualifications for the professorship. But the special offence leading to his recent notice of dismissal was that he had appealed to the Governor of Arkansas to reprieve twelve negroes condemned to death on a dubious charge of killing two whites during a peonage riot when nearly seventy negroes were killed. Such an outrage as his appeal for mercy could not be allowed in an Institute conducted on lines of the strictest patriotic and military discipline—a discipline so strict that when I asked why Cadets strutted as on a German parade and, instead of crossing an open space diagonally, marched solemnly round it with sharp rectangular turns—I was told that these methods of progression were disciplinary rules to prepare the young for the heroism of warfare ; which, however, very few intended to display in after life.

Against such military spirit Colonel Kerlin proclaimed a defiance inevitably abhorrent to the officer in command and to the State which supported an institution famous for association with the names of Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee, who lies buried within the grounds under a monument of himself carved in marble as he lived. As though in confirmation of his defiance, my host, on the very first day I was living in his attractive household, actually took me to a negro chapel ! And after the service he addressed the black and parti-coloured congregation, telling them that I had travelled among their aboriginal kindred in Central Africa, and had even taken some part in the deliverance of many slaves from a shameful bondage.<sup>1</sup> Whereupon they crowded round me, uttering Christian blessings with their thick lips, and asking me how best they could give me pleasure. I suggested a concert of the negro "Spirituals," and they said they would have it ready in three days.

They kept their word. On the third evening they sent to

<sup>1</sup> See "More Changes More Chances," pp. 38-97

tell me I might come. I found the chapel chock full, Mrs. Kerlin and myself being the only white people there. I think it was a Baptist chapel, but as no people have ever yet done more than profess Christianity, I do not bother my head about the various distinctions of its profession. At the far end were ranged rows of fifty or sixty "coloured" men and women, all musical, all endowed by nature with the soft but powerful negro voice, and accustomed to sing in unison or in parts. I have not known another country, not even Wales, where such a choir would be found as a matter of course in a little chapel.

Since the abolition of slavery in America the creation of "Spirituals" has ceased. Education, of itself, must inevitably kill the illiterate simplicity of the faith that marks their themes. The stories of Daniel in the lions' den, of Joseph, Ruth, and Moses are to educated people no longer articles of faith. But the "Spiritual" cannot be produced without the faith of children to whom no miracle is impossible or even unusual. Beautiful songs like "Roll, Jordan, roll," and "Swing low, sweet chariot," cannot be composed when Jordan and the chariot have to be interpreted as symbols, and are not accepted as realities, almost visible to the naked eye. It is only by minds of that child-like quality that a "Spiritual" can be even imagined; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. Nor is it possible for "Spirituals" to arise except among slaves. It is not without reason that nearly all may be divided into "Sorrow Songs" and "Songs of Deliverance." What but the forlorn and yearning spirit of slaves could have produced such songs as "Steal away to Jesus," or "Nobody knows the troubles I've seen, nobody knows but Jesus. Sometimes I'se up, sometimes I'se down, sometimes I'se almost to de groun'."? What but an oppressed people could have produced "Go down, Moses," with its repeated refrain, "Let my people go! "?

With celestial brightness, as of the dayspring from on high, the Evangel of the early Methodists or Baptists must

have come to souls enslaved in darkness and unbroken despair after the memories and traditions of Africa began to fade. “I got a robe ! You got a robe ! All God’s chillun got a robe !”—what assurance of hope for a blessed transfiguration into the angelic state ! And then follows the soft refrain, “Heaven ! Heaven !” with a radiancy of glory and bliss beyond compare. Only in a community of souls enslaved could so incalculable a contrast even be imagined. Dwellers in the Southern States have often warned me to beware of “sentiment” in thinking of the negro. Yet, without being anything but a case-hardened traveller who has seen all the evils of the world and cannot now be surprised at any of them, I have always found something irresistibly attractive in the humour, the pathos, and the music of negro descendants of slaves. Partly, I suppose, the attraction comes from pity at the sight of a people suffering for the sins, not of their own race or of their own fathers, but of my race and my fathers, whose atrocious sins are now visited upon the descendants of our former victims. But, besides that hideous reason for pity, I have found in the coloured people of America much the same traits that still distinguish the main kindred of their race in Africa—the generous good-humour, the responsive laughter, the faithful affection for the man who keeps his word to them, and, above all, the enviable delight in music, dancing, and all emotional art.

## CHAPTER X

“ BUT O THE HEAVY CHANGE ! ”

“ *O, Captain ! my Captain ! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weathered every rack; the prize we sought is won,  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring—  
O, Captain ! my Captain ! rise up and hear the bells.* ”

WALT WHITMAN on the death of Lincoln.

“ *As though the emerald should say, Whatever happens I must be emerald.* ” From of old that saying of Marcus Aurelius has been in my thoughts, and now, as the tide of life recedes and I am left more and more alone, it has sunk deeper than ever and even becomes endeared.”

HAVELOCK ELLIS : “ Impressions and Comments ” ;  
Second Series, page 106.

TOUGH Walter Pater, one of my many Masters, found the main trait of the Aurelian life to be “ a sentiment of mediocrity, though of a mediocrity, for once, really golden,” he must have been delighted with the Stoic Emperor’s exquisite saying. I am told that, even in Oxford, Walter Pater has long been forgotten, but I occasionally find, even in London, some second-hand reference to his dogma that “ to burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life,” and the metaphor from jewelry is akin to the emerald’s resolve.<sup>1</sup> It is true that the virtuous Emperor’s mind was fixed on the persistent retention of a high personality, and the Oxford writer’s intention was never to form habits but to snatch the passionate sense of the moment as it passes, lest he should sleep before evening on this short day of frost and sun. But both implied a certain hardness besides the brilliance or persistence of the precious stone. And I

<sup>1</sup> “ The Renaissance,” Epilogue.

have found the hardness most easy to emulate, most difficult to avoid.

Like Havelock Ellis, as the tide of life recedes, I am left more and more alone. My friends and enemies, especially those who knew me when I was young, are rapidly departing. In the two or three years after the Washington Conference one after another left me, and the death of an enemy brings a sense of bereavement and the transitoriness of life almost as keen as the death of a friend. What surprises me is the gemlike hardness with which the mind endures the departure of enemy or friend. “To part from you is like parting from life itself ! ” said a loving and most lovable woman, dying as I sat beside her, and I knew the love and sorrow half revealed in the words. But from the high-set window I was looking across a gorge of the Arve to the snow-tipped barrier of the Jura, most beautiful of mountain lines, and I longed to rush out again into the splendour of nature, and the full course of human activity. That hardness of heart may serve, like irony, as a protection and covering for defence under which we may hide, just as a hermit crab hurries to conceal its softness in an alien shell. But the callousness of the indwelling spirit is amazing, though perhaps universal. Of the old Marquesa de Montemayor we read :

“ She secretly refused to believe that anyone (herself excepted) loved anyone. All families lived in a wasteful atmosphere of custom and kissed one another with secret indifference. She saw that the people of this world moved about in an armour of egotism, drunk with self-gazing, athirst for compliments, hearing little of what was said to them, unmoved by the accidents that befell their closest friends, in dread of all appeals that might interrupt their long communion with their own desires.”<sup>1</sup>

Is there not a similar touch of hardness, of callousness, in that passage from a Jewish writer which Matthew Arnold was fond of repeating to himself, and in fact wrote again in his notebook on the very day of his death ?

<sup>1</sup> “The Bridge of San Luis Rey,” by Thornton Wilder : p. 17.

“ Weep bitterly over the dead, as he is worthy, and then comfort thyself ; drive heaviness away : thou shalt not do him good, but hurt thyself. When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance rest ; and be comforted for him when his spirit is departed from him.”

The passage is from Ecclesiasticus xxxviii, and Matthew Arnold slightly altered the wording of the received translation. But, as in Marcus Aurelius and Matthew Arnold himself, there lies in the words a deliberate Stoicism. And Stoicism is magnificent but it is not peace. Or if peace, a peace girt about in steel-plated armour, like the League at Geneva defended by “sanctions,” and existing only under cover of that stern defence.

Thus for myself, as the tide of life receded, leaving me more and more alone through the death of so many friends valuable to me and in some cases to the whole country, I drove heaviness away and welcomed every opportunity of increased activity, knowing that the time was short. I also began to put together some record of a few among the people I had known, and the events at which I had been present. But a journalist can find time for the writing of books only in the intervals of his work for livelihood, and those are few and brief. Twice in 1922 I was sent again to Ireland owing to the atrocious civil war which the Irish, by a fine use of what grammarians used to call “meiosis,” speak of in 1928 as “the troubles” or “the crossness.” As our ship touched at Queenstown on my return from Washington, in February, 1922, I had rejoiced to see the Irish flag flying from the harbour’s central fort, and in March I rejoiced again to see it flying over Dublin Castle itself, that symbol of ancient subjection, while at the gates Irish sentries in brand-new uniforms of dark green, strutted to and fro, trying hard to turn about in military fashion, as no one but a soldier ever thinks of turning round. Through the big railings in front of the Bank, little crowds stood perpetually gazing at the Irish soldiers, as at lions in a cage ; and indeed the soldiers were to me far more amazing than

any lions. The British army had almost gone. The centuries of "The Garrison" were over. Ten years before, who would not have smiled sadly at the mere suggestion of such a change?

But behind those emblems of deliverance, I felt the approaching spectre of that most horrible form of murder—the mutual murder of brothers born. Speaking at various places in Southern Ireland, Mr. de Valera had foretold that for the cause of the Republic "they might have to fight over the bodies of their own countrymen, and wade through the blood of the Irish Government's soldiers." After the thrills and excitements of the last few years, it was difficult for anyone of Irish spirit to settle down into the monotonous paths of peace. As "Æ." wrote at the time: "We are at present dominated by the military mind, which has many fine qualities, like courage and self-sacrifice, but is generally the most stupid and pig-headed kind of mind for anything except self-sacrifice." That he wrote in his own "Irish Homestead," but a darker side of the Irish spirit was exposed in his address to the Sociological Society in London:

"In the shadows of Ireland, North and South," he said, "lurks reptilian human life, bigots who, in the name of Christ, spit on His precepts, and who have put on the whole armory of hate; and men, and women, too, who have known the dark intoxication of blood, and who seek, half unconsciously, for the renewal of that sinister ecstasy. I dread any wild enterprise which might let loose that passionate life."

In conversation that noble-minded man reminded me of the distinction drawn by William James between "the thin philosopher and the fat"—the cold, abstract, logical philosopher, and the warm, human, concrete philosopher, who knows the ways and hearts of men. There was no doubt to which class "Æ." himself belonged, or to which belonged Mr. de Valera and Erskine Childers, whom then I heard speaking for the last time (St. Patrick's Day, 1922). He was mounted beside "the Countess" on a cart at a suburban

street-corner—so honest, so uncompromising, so gallant, so logical in his doctrine, and so “ thin ” and shadowy, so like the stubborn ghost that was soon to leave his distracted frame. As to the Government cause—the opposing cause to so many brave, logical, but “ thin ” spirits like his—I may quote from one of Michael Collins’s last speeches too. Speaking at Cork that March, he said :

“ Was it the doctrine of Mr. de Valera and his followers that suffering and fighting were to go on just because they were good in themselves ? It is suggested that martyrdom and trials and destruction are better than materialism and slavery. We hear about the hard road which the opposition is pointing out to the Irish nation, and the inducements that are put before the people towards ease, towards living practically the life of beasts. This is the language of madness or worse. There is no slavery under the Treaty. The chances of materialism are not greater than they would be under a Republican form of government, or any other form of government.”

In June, Southern Ireland declared for the Treaty by a majority of 22 against the Republicans returned at the elections, but the civil war was only intensified. At the end of June, I was again sent to Dublin to witness the first meeting of the Dail under the new Constitution. But instead I witnessed the siege of the Four Courts, which had been held since April by Rory O’Connor and a party of Republicans without much interference from the Government troops. The attack was then mainly hastened by a speech of Mr. Winston Churchill (June 26), threatening the termination of the Treaty unless order were restored. Firing in the streets was heavy, especially along the embankment of the Liffey, where the Government had stationed field-guns to shell the Four Courts. Soon after midday on July 7th, a loud explosion shook the neighbourhood. The Republicans had ignited a mine inside the Courts, and that beautiful classic building went up in smoke and flame. A few hours afterwards I went clambering among its ruins. In three places the flames still roared over the

ceilings and beams. The great dome of green copper had almost melted away. Thick columns of smoke rose upon the wind, bearing half-consumed fragments of legal and valuable historic documents far across the city. Now and again another arch or wall came crashing down, and at the south-east corner gaped the breach battered by the Government's four guns.

All the streets and squares were lively with death. Unexpectedly I came upon houses with windows and doors barricaded and sandbagged, rifles sticking out of the loop-holes like almonds in a tipsy cake. Here and there I caught sight of "Irregulars" lurking behind a chimney-stack, just waiting for a shot at anyone who seemed suitable game. To return a cycle I had borrowed from Stephen Gwynn, I ran up the steps of one of the great Clubs on St. Stephen's Green, and, finding the door locked, peered through the glass. There I perceived the muzzle of a large revolver separated from my own muzzle only by the thickness of the glass, and behind the revolver the white and haggard face of a poor boy, worn with nerves and sleeplessness, his tired and hungry eyes expressing anything but welcome. I smiled and waved adieu with lily hand. He did not smile, nor even wave the revolver.

Late the same night, I was returning to the Standard Hotel from a visit to Mrs. Green, who had been round the streets with a paste-pot, sticking up manifestoes for the Free State in hopes of counteracting the ceaseless propaganda of turmoil. Just as I was turning into Harcourt Street a motor-lorry, full of Irish soldiers, dashed across in front of me, and instantly, from the next house but one at the opposite corner, a large bomb was thrown. It exploded with horrible noise in the middle of the road, and violent rifle fire followed. Bullets, fragments of shell, and bits of granite, chipped from the pavement, came whistling around me, and if any other civilians beside myself had been near, probably some would have fallen. For a moment I remembered the prophecy of my friend Philip Gibbs, who had

foretold in a recent book that I should meet my end from a bullet on the streets of Dublin. But I escaped as usual, and was amused to find the guests in the hotel seeking a vain shelter behind the bar—and that a teetotal bar !

Next day, four miles south of the city, I found the village of Rathfarnham occupied by the Republicans, the provisions and shops commandeered, the main road barricaded. Every harmless passer-by like myself was conscripted to fill sandbags—a monotonous occupation—and it was said that even the students at the great Jesuit College there had to take their turn. As I came back, I witnessed a little ceremony that would have delighted Wordsworth, who believed that a child's whole vocation was endless imitation. For children were playing an exciting game. Placing a board on little wheels to represent a motor-lorry, they invited one of their number to mount the board, while another drove it along, till, as he approached a corner, he said with due solemnity, “Your hour has come !” and turned the car into the very arms of another group who proceeded with the assassination in due form. Pasted on nearly all the lamp-posts around them, they may have read the manifesto :

“The fateful hour has come. At the dictation of our hereditary enemy our rightful cause is being treacherously assailed by recreant Irishmen.”

So the atrocious struggle continued, until, in the very next month, and within little over a week (August 13 and 22) the double blow fell upon the country. Arthur Griffith died, and Michael Collins was killed in a wretched skirmish. Men of opposite and complementary characters they were. Arthur Griffith was described to me by Mrs. Green as “a granite monolith,” and indeed there was something granite in his steadfast and unflinching devotion to his own great idea ; something granite in his silence and his freedom from all the popular arts of exuberant rhetoric and open-hearted humour. But the comparison reminded me also of the cromlechs so abundant in Wales. For, besides the aloofness

and solitude of a Druid stone, he seemed to have inherited from some Welsh ancestor a touch of the seclusive or secretive nature of the Welsh people. Very different was the temperament of Michael Collins, whom I had seen two years before eluding arrest as by magic, when a vast reward was offered for his body, dead or alive. Yet, within that short time, less than a year since the signing of the Treaty, he had won by his personal charm and cheerful courage such affectionate admiration that his death was lamented in England by every paper, I think without exception. And now, just when the need of two such men in Ireland was at its height, both within a few days were gone. "*Breves et infaustos populi Romani amores*," said Tacitus. Short-lived and ill-starred have been the darlings of the Irish people, too.

My long connection with Ireland as a journalist almost ended with those episodes in the civil war, though I have from time to time been afforded the pleasure of visiting that most beautiful country again, sometimes staying at Cushendun in the Glens of Antrim, sometimes at Glengarriff on Bantry Bay with Dr. Hector Munro in his excellent sanatorium, where he strove to purify me of evil in purgatorial vats of boiling peat. Once, too, in June, 1926, I went with Sidney and Gertrude Parry of Cushendun far out along the desolate coast of Galway through a region of island rocks, where scattered relics of the Gaels were starving on potatoes grown in crannies of the rocks, flavoured with seaweed boiled down into jelly; and, with the aid of their priest, I was able to learn something of their pitiful state. One bright memory shines like a star among my various visits as Mr. Broadbent or the happy tourist. In September, 1923, on my way through County Cork, I had to drive about two miles round at Mallow because the Republicans had wrecked the great railway bridge over the Blackwater; and on the way I met Bernard Shaw, also returning from Kerry. Hair and beard, all tawny when first I knew him, had now turned white, but the eyes retained their singularly clear and

untarnished blue. He was bound for Birmingham to superintend the production of his “Methuselah” in all five parts, though he admitted, as is his way, that even three parts had reduced New York to such profound sleep that coffee had to be provided free, and in buckets. Speaking of the destruction of Sir Horace Plunkett’s home at Foxrock by the Republicans, he said he did not pity even such a true patriot as Plunkett for his loss, because we all gather too much around us, and at least a third of London should be burnt every year. I told him of the Central Africans I had known who destroy their villages every two or three years, as the Red Indians also burn their wigwams.

He was pleased to hear of such good sense, and we parted in great amity. Indeed, he had always shown himself startlingly polite and amiable to me, as to everyone else, and with that charming memory of the finest mind now existing upon this earth, I must regretfully say farewell to his country, though I might have still so much besides farewell to say. But the peril to which an Englishman exposes himself when touching Ireland was again made evident to me in 1927. For an innocent article of mine upon the political situation there stirred a Dublin correspondent of an American newspaper to such a pitch of fury that he poured out upon me nearly two columns of that eloquent vituperation for which the Irish are so justly renowned, culminating in the opprobrious epithet of “Liberal !”

In September 1922, I was invited by the London School of Economics to accompany a large party of students and professors to Vienna, where I was to lecture at the University upon the Washington Conference. I spoke in a great hall to a crowded audience of men and women, who astonished me by listening with obvious understanding, not only to my English but to my German as well ; and next morning I received the honour of a long report in the *Neue Freie Presse*, and a description of my discourse as “sympathisch und schlüssig”—the latter word implying pretty much what our artists mean by “slick.” What English audience of

such size could have listened to a German speech with that understanding for a whole hour ? But, indeed, the strangest thing about Vienna was the tenacity with which she clung to her ancient reputation for “ culture.”

Austria was a decapitated or mutilated country. Her limbs had been hewn off by the atrocious Treaty of St. Germain, while the head continued to retain its habitual smile. In the Roman’s fable, the belly languished when the members struck work, but here the head was isolated, not only from the members, but from the belly itself. Vienna, so lately the capital of a great and diverse Empire, had now no visible means of subsistence. She had not even money to eat, except the few pence that Jewish dealers from Holland doled out in exchange for ancestral jewels and works of art. The Krone had sunk till a tram-fare had the nominal value of £40, and a few days later of £68. Bread at the nominal value of the Krone cost £190 a pound, and it cost a woman £1600 to have her hair “ undulated.” Thrift had become a vice ; speculation a virtue ; and the good honest citizen who, by eating the bread of carefulness so highly recommended by economists, had saved enough to live in luxury upon £5000 a year till his life’s end, now discovered that for six weeks and no more could he live upon the bread of carefulness without butter, and then must die. To this were reduced the officials on fixed incomes, the pensioners, and the army officers lately so proud. In an establishment, founded and endowed by the old Emperor for the widows of distinguished generals, sixty old ladies were trying their best to exist upon the purchasing value of 7s. 6d. a week between them. I found them starving and shivering in aristocratic silence, and but for the small and persistent aid of our English Quakers they would have starved and shivered out of this democratic world. In a suburb just outside the city I talked with three elderly colonels who were building a house for themselves to the best of their military and aristocratic ability, and I was amazed to see the walls of stones and mortar stand.

Speaking of the city's condition, a wit described it as "Hopeless but not serious." Two forms of productive activity still flourished. At a street corner one heard the ceaseless hum of the Government's printing machines, by day and night striking off worthless notes to a value beyond astronomical calculation. And whenever I returned from an excursion into the surrounding country, I was accompanied by crowds of men and women carrying knapsacks and baskets crammed with all the kindly earth's produce that they had been able to grub or snatch from neighbouring farms and gardens. Can a minus quantity be counted as a lucrative occupation? If so, there was a third: for all workers lived rent-free, the house-owners being only too glad if a tenant merely kept the houses from falling down, as many fell.

Yet there is a certain prestige in ancient grandeur that almost counts as credit even in a bankrupt city. And Vienna was peculiarly rich in such prestige. Here Marcus Aurelius shuffled off the coil of Empire, and here Western civilisation turned the tide against the Turk and Slav. Vienna possesses a prestige of mind as well, for here was the home of Haydn, Gluck, and Mozart. Here I could still visit the widely scattered houses in which Beethoven composed the greatest music of the world. Here I stood in the alley where the melody of the "*Ständchen*" suddenly sprang up in Schubert's mind while he was playing bowls. And here still lived Freud, ever ready to console the human heart by exposing noisome swamps of complexes and inhibitions lying stagnant in it, equally foul and unsuspected.

Enshrouded in the grey mantle of another grandeur Vienna lay before me. It was an Imperial grandeur, descended from the ages when her Emperor represented, not only the heritage of Rome, but God's own temporal power here on earth. When I remembered what was implied in that title of "Emperor," the Spirits Ironic and the Spirits of the Pities began to pervade the scene. I felt them hovering near as I wandered through the vast palaces

of the Burg and Schönbrunn, and gazed in melancholy astonishment at the interminable series of gilded passages, boudoirs, reception-rooms, banqueting halls, "studies" (used for some purpose, no doubt), chambers of mirrors, chambers of Chinese art, and bedrooms fitted with gilt and brocaded furniture, in the face of which I could never have ventured to undress and hang up my clothes for the night.

There was Maria Theresa's own bed, vast in breadth beyond the dreams of matrimony (and indeed the poor woman had fifteen children to sport upon its counterpane); there was her enormous clock, warranted to go three years without winding up—the same time that an elephant goes with young; there was the little bed on which poor imprisoned L'Aiglon died, child of such fond ambitions; there was the iron bed on which simple-hearted, stupid, unfortunate, and venerable Franz Josef slept and died, hardly awakened even by the roar of the world-wide conflict which he had partly aroused while he nodded sleepily at his desk. But to me the most ironic and pitiful of all were the pictures hanging on nearly all the walls—pictures of glorious battles long forgotten, and portraits of delicate and exquisitely dressed princes and princesses, all long forgotten, too, though once untouchable as Divinity. Why! there in Vienna I met in person a beautiful young woman who once was one of the seven little girls appointed as a privilege to attend a little Archduchess, and to be whipped in turn whenever the little Archduchess did anything to deserve a beating.

Even to enjoy that vicarious whipping one had to show six or eight quarterings on one's scutcheon, without a single bar sinister, and the line drawn between those who had entrance to Court (were *Hoffähig*) and those who had not was as rigid as the skirts of virtue. It seemed incredible that one man, one family, should have claimed so many rooms to live in—I suppose there were at least a thousand in both big palaces together, to say nothing of the palaces scattered round the country—and now all the pride and

glory had departed. One palace storey was converted into an orphanage. Other royal chambers were used for offices. Common mortals, having no quarterings at all, and any amount of bars sinister, went ranging through the Imperial intimacies as through a museum. They wandered at ease among the spacious gardens, so lately the scenes of Imperial revelries and arbored *amours*. Even among the offspring of sublime aristocracy itself, the men of title were working like other people, and the women were weeping, or working too.

But fresh and lively around me ran the Movement of Youth—the *Jugendbewegung*—which, on the mental and spiritual side, marked a severance from tradition quite as sharp as the political revolution. It was a revolt against what Youth regarded as the untruthfulness of traditional religion and morality. It owned many teachers, but perhaps the influence of Nietzsche was the strongest. What Rousseau had been to Youth in the eighteenth century, Nietzsche had become to Austria and to other German peoples then—Nietzsche proclaiming the love of Earth and Nature, the close and immediate contact with life (*Unmittelbarkeit*), and hatred of “that cold-hearted monster, the State,” with all its monstrous armies and detestable enormities. The problem of Youth was to combine the development of personality with high service to mankind. “Oh, work for the good of Humanity!” I have heard Ethical Societies sing that precept as a kind of anthem in their ritual. How depressing, how antagonising it sounds! How near to despair it brings the human listener! And yet the Movement of Youth does not despair.

All that year (1922) I had been writing every week for Massingham's *Nation*, and for the *Baltimore Sun*, besides writing several articles for the *Manchester Guardian*, and tucking bits of my book into any interstices that journalism offered. During the summer my old friend and colleague in adventure, H. N. Brailsford, was wisely selected by the Independent Labour Party as editor for their projected

weekly, the *New Leader*—wisely because no journalist had a finer perception of advanced Labour policy, or more accurate knowledge of the European situation. By his own incisive style and his sensitive appreciation of the great arts, he quickly made it one of the most vital and interesting of weeklies—a paper to be read not only by professedly Labour people, but by all men and women of intelligence ; and that kind of success was, I suppose, the main reason why the executive committee of the I.L.P. discharged him from his position as editor four years after his first number appeared (in October, 1922).<sup>1</sup> But from that first number until the Party's decree was issued against him (October, 1926), I wrote for his paper almost every week whenever I was in England, so that, during its early months, what with the *Nation*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *New Leader*, and a good deal of outside work, I was kept pretty busy. For three “middles” a week are as much as anyone ought to undertake, since each “middle,” being a personal essay and to that extent artistic, must necessarily be more exhausting than several “leaders.”

But up to the very beginning of 1923, “all went well,” as the reporters say of a train or ship just before it is wrecked. Then indeed the crash came. I was in Wales, and rather irritated with Massingham for altering an article I had written for him on Matthew Arnold. But it was only the usual journalistic irritation, and next week I sent him a phantasy on the fortunate appearance of Handel's ghost to conduct a performance of his “Samson” at Dolgelley, when the conductor had been delayed by a flooded stream. I was doubtful about so unusual a subject, and all the more delighted when he returned the proof with the word “Charming” written by his own hand on the top. From him any compliment was rare, but this one was characteristic. For he was just in the midst of the crisis that drove him from

<sup>1</sup> I have served under many editors, and nearly all the very best have been deposed on account of their excellence : Massingham (twice), A. G. Gardiner, Robert Donald, J. A. Spender, H. N. Brailsford, and Mrs. H. M. Swanwick

his high position as editor, and yet he found time to be gracious.

On the very next day (January 10th, 1923), I read without warning that he had been compelled to resign from the *Nation*. The chief proprietors, a wealthy Quaker firm, appeared to him, and still appear to me, to have acted with a secretive diplomacy, wanting in the frank and open-hearted consideration due to the man who alone had created their paper and raised it to an unusual height of influence. I need not enter into their private motives, partly financial, mainly, I think, personal. But on public grounds they could plead political justification, for they were patriarchal Liberal capitalists on a big scale, and it had become obvious that Massingham was beginning to despair of Liberalism under such leadership as then prevailed, or in part prevailed, and was tending more and more decisively to the Labour cause. In his fine estimate of Massingham's nature and genius, Bernard Shaw has written on this point :

" By sheer talent and character, Massingham had a pretty good run, not only as a journalist but as a martyr who always rose from his ashes with ludicrous promptitude and success. What really handicapped him and yet helped him (all helps are handicaps, too) was that in his politics he was a transition journalist, and the transition was for him a development of Liberalism as the specifically progressive force in politics into Socialism as the next step ahead. . . . Now the *Nation*, though artistically and journalistically entirely a creation of Massingham's, was financed by Liberal money to be a Liberal organ ; and he found for the third time that they who pay the piper will finally call the tune, however masterfully the piper may play."<sup>1</sup>

Of course, that excuse holds good. One cannot expect wealthy owners to continue paying for a paper and losing money over it, no matter how wealthy they may be, when the policy of their paper is gradually diverging from their own. Yet a paper is a kind of public-house, and if the

<sup>1</sup> "H. W. M." A selection from his writings, with introductory essays by various friends and members of his Staff ; pp. 212, 213 (1925).

proprietors had owned a public-house (an incredible hypothesis, for I believe most Quakers are teetotallers) and a clever manager had raised it to extraordinary eminence in the neighbourhood, would he not, in equity at least, have been able to claim some Tenant Right, some Compensation for Improvement, some Right of Option to Purchase ? It appears to me, who am no lawyer, that a man who has created a great paper and run it for sixteen years with extraordinary success, ought not to be flung aside like a dirty rag, no matter how far he may be in advance of the owners' opinions. What we who had worked on the *Nation* Staff—in some cases, like my own, for the full sixteen years—thought of the matter was proved when the whole number of us (with the exception of one literary man, who had only lately joined) resigned in a body, to our great financial and personal loss.

More important, more disastrous, was the effect of the blow upon our editor himself. H. M. Tomlinson, since famous as a descriptive writer, but for some years his assistant editor, and intimate with him to the last, has written :

" If the *Nation* had been mine, I would not have changed it for a fleet of *Shamrocks* and the American cup. I would have valued it at more than ten new bays to a factory. There was not in the world, I used to imagine fondly, another review of quite the distinction and quality of the *Nation* ; and certainly there was not one to equal it in its power to raise both furious enmity and grateful approval. But the Liberals cast Massingham because cardour may be regarded as an uncomfortable shoe. A cosy notion, for there are plenty of boot-shops. But I know how the proof that he was not wanted shook him, in spite of his gay acceptance of defeat. . . . He did not want to go. The *Nation* was his creation, but he had to leave it as though it were a grocer's shop and he was the retiring manager. His jokes about it were outrageous. But he was badly wounded, for he was as tender-hearted as a sentimental girl. . . . It was assumed that he was hard, bright, and ruthless. But one morning, after his severance was announced, I went into his room, and he stood at his desk brooding. There were tears

in his eyes. 'Read that,' he said, fiercely thrusting a letter at me. It was from J. L. Garvin. 'I've spent my life for the Liberals, and here we are, and they don't care. But that man,' he said, pointing to Garvin's letter, 'I've gone out of my way to mock.' "<sup>1</sup>

The blow was fatal to that English heart, hard and bright as the emerald in outward seeming, but over-sensitive in its depths. On April 28th, 1923, he parted from his *Nation* with the noble article called "Vale," and we of his Staff all contributed articles signed, and our last. For some months he strove to maintain his amazing buoyancy, writing for the *Spectator* and the *Christian Science Monitor*, and struggling with scraps of reminiscence. But on opening the *Northern Whig* at Derry on my way from Letterkenny to Cushendun (August 29th, 1924), I saw his sudden death announced, with an appreciation by T. P. O'Connor. Till that day he had been present among us, and I could say to myself, "Thank God, one man lives who will always fight for the noble, the honourable, the unpopular cause whatever happens!" But now he had gone, leaving the world duller and more exposed to the devastating atmosphere of the commonplace.

He died at sixty-four, and to me who had known him as well as a member of a Staff can know his editor, and as an admirer can know one who always held aloof and remained isolated in the depths of his nature, it was not difficult to estimate the qualities which gave him his power, making him the object of so much devotion and so much obloquy. In brief they were an absolute sincerity, an incapacity to conceal his real opinion; reliance upon conviction, regardless of Government tactics, Ministerial appeals, and popular outcries; an entire indifference to worldly success, to all the tempting amenities of Society, and the comfortable allurements of the rich and great; a vital rapidity of decision,

<sup>1</sup> "H.W.M.," pp. 123-126. J. L. Garvin was then, and, happily, still is (1928) editor of the *Observer*, a Sunday paper mainly devoted to supplying the Unionist Party with brains.

but a readiness to confess an error due to impetuous judgment, especially in estimating the value of the men he had valued too high. In his obituary notices much space was given to eulogies upon his vivid and trenchant style. For myself, I have never bothered about a man's style. I seldom notice it unless it is bad. What I do notice is the man revealed beneath the style—the man who is the style. Of course, Massingham wrote well. He could not help it, being what he was, so passionate, so sensitive, so indignant at cruelty and injustice, so perceptive of all beauty, whether of sound or sight or sense, and so humorous besides. It was his nature to write well. When Oscar Wilde was called upon to wonder at the Niagara Falls, he retorted : "The wonder would be if they did not fall." The wonder would have been if Massingham had written badly. But it was as an editor that he stood supreme, and for one great editor I could any day find good writers thick as a wilderness of monkeys.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Other accounts of Massingham and my relation to him may be found in "Changes and Chances," especially pp. 186, 187: and in "More Changes More Chances," especially pp. 215 to 222.

## CHAPTER XI

“ VAE VICTIS VAE VICTORIBUS ! ”

*“ Pity is a rebel passion. Its hand is against the strong, against the organised force of society, against conventional sanctions and accepted Gods. It is the Kingdom of Heaven within us fighting against the brute powers of the world ; and it is apt to have those qualities of unreason, of contempt for the counting of costs and the balancing of sacrifices, of recklessness, and even, in the last resort, of ruthlessness, which so often mark the paths of heavenly things and the doings of the children of light. It brings not peace, but a sword.”*

GILBERT MURRAY : Introductory Note to his translation of the  
“ Troades.”

I HAVE often wondered which man has most nearly reached the utmost height of human happiness. Sometimes I have inclined to fix on one, sometimes on another—a great composer conducting his own symphony, a great dramatist witnessing his own drama, a great architect watching his temple rise, a great scientist discovering the cause of malaria or exploring the origins of mankind. But after long hesitation I have concluded that the man who has really been the happiest in all human history was M. Poincaré during the year 1923. Happiness lies in the fulfilment of function, the conquest of difficulties, the satisfaction of desire. M. Poincaré’s function was statecraft, which he fulfilled ; his difficulty was England, which he overcame ; his desire was the ruin of Germany, which he accomplished. When at the end of that year he rested from his labours and his works followed him, was ever happiness to be compared with his ?

From the first, fate smiled upon his purpose. Early in 1922 he had succeeded M. Briand as Premier and Foreign Secretary. Throughout that year England was much occupied with her own affairs and her Government’s failures.

Largely owing to Mr. Lloyd George's entire ignorance of the relative fighting powers of Greeks and Turks—an ignorance which anyone who had been present with Greeks and Turks in wartime could instantly have dispelled—the ramshackle Greek armies had been driven from Asia Minor with overwhelming loss, followed by the hideous massacre at Smyrna (September, 1922). The power of Turkey, which Allenby seemed to have overthrown, revived so strongly that war with England might well have resulted but for the military and diplomatic skill of General Harington in the autumn of the year, supported by vigorous Opposition at home and in the Dominions. Our Coalition Government broke, and a General Election returned Mr. Bonar Law as Prime Minister under a pledge of "tranquillity." On the Reparations Commission, set up by Versailles with almost absolute powers over German finance and economic life, France held the Chairmanship and, with the backing of Belgium, a steady majority. No account was taken of the disagreement or abstention of Sir John Bradbury, the British representative upon the Commission. The German offers of free labour and material for restoring the devastated regions in Northern France were rejected under the influence of the French contractors, who naturally wished to retain the lucrative jobs in their own hands. From the middle of the year, when an International Conference on reparations broke down owing to the French opposition to all compromise, M. Poincaré began repeating his dogma that only by the occupation of the Ruhr could reparations be secured and the "will to pay" be enforced upon the German mind.

In the last week of December, 1922, the Reparations Commission (the British representative dissenting) reported "voluntary default" in German deliveries of timber, paving stone, and a small percentage of coal. The French Iron-masters' Association (*Comité des Forges*) redoubled their insistence upon the Ruhr occupation, because by the hoped-for extra supply of free coal and coke, they could crush German rivalry and destroy the competition of English

coal and iron, which, owing to the free supplies of reparations, were already suffering in the same manner as British ship-building. That process had begun which led *The Times* to write later on (November 28, 1923), that "the French can drive British steel and metallurgical products out of every neutral market, and swamp our home markets." Yet it was not merely the impending loss to vital branches of our commerce and manufacture that roused the opposition of all parties in the country, and every important newspaper but one or perhaps two. It was against the illegality and unwise-dom of the Poincaré policy that the nation protested, and if at that time the Prime Minister had spoken with the energy displayed by Lord Curzon as Foreign Secretary in the following summer (especially in the Note to France and Belgium, of August 11th), it is possible that the crime would never have been perpetrated.

Unhappily, Mr. Bonar Law, pledged to tranquillity, and already perhaps conscious of the physical weakness that led to his resignation in the following May, was not strong enough to overcome M. Poincaré's determination at the Paris Conference of the first week in January. The French Premier, almost without a thought, rejected his suggestions of a moratorium and definite fixture of the reparation sum, and then poor Mr. Bonar Law retired to London with a feeble promise of "benevolent neutrality" towards an action which he himself and nearly the whole of his country condemned. It was as though a villa resident should say, "I really disapprove of your intention to kill our neighbour, though I did have a serious quarrel with him lately. But if you insist upon the murder please go ahead. You may climb my garden wall to do it, and I will look the other way." So M. Poincaré accepted the "*rupture cordiale*" with indifferent gratitude, climbed the garden wall, and committed the murder at leisure.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "Right and Wrong in the Ruhr Valley": a Study of the Legal Aspect of the Occupation (1923), and "The Ruhr: the History of the French Occupation, its Meaning and Consequences," by Joseph King (1924).



C. P. SCOTT  
From the Epstein Bust



His hands being free, M. Poincaré wisely struck quickly and hard. On January 11th, the French invaded the Ruhr with overwhelming military force—machine guns, infantry, cavalry, armoured cars, followed by tanks, heavy guns, aeroplanes, and all other equipment of war. The pretence was the protection of certain technicians, engineers, and customs officers there engaged in perfect safety, but M. Poincaré's object was no such petty and transient an affair. His desire was the ruin and depopulation of a country already defeated, nearly ruined, and reduced to extremity by war, sickness, and famine. While the old enemy was weak, disarmed, poverty-stricken, and isolated, he resolved to strike once more and make an end. Happy in opportunity, he saw that no one was able or willing to interrupt his purpose. America gathered her skirts about her, threatened to withdraw her troops from the Rhine, and did so at once. There was a party in England which called upon our Government to do the same, but, fortunately, better counsels prevailed and the small British force remained, standing in the opinion of all Germans as their one hope of justice. Otherwise, M. Poincaré felt himself able to follow out the fine old-fashioned way of dealing with an enemy when he is down, and by attacking a helpless people in peace-time with all the resources of the greatest army in the world, he conceived himself able to accomplish his desire with extraordinary and rapid success. I often wished that I had been a French politician myself, so that I might rejoice in the spectacle I then witnessed. But my part was the humbler one of increasing M. Poincaré's happiness by recording the extent of his triumph.

At the end of January, I was sent to write upon the conditions in great cities of Germany outside the Ruhr, where the *Manchester Guardian* had an excellent correspondent in F. A. Voigt, a pupil of J. G. Hamilton in journalism. Accordingly I went straight to Berlin. I had not been there since the day when war was declared and

interminable crowds swarmed to and fro "Unter den Linden," shouting "*Die Wacht am Rhein*," "*Deutschland über Alles*," and other national songs, or cheering the Kaiser, the Crown Prince, and every knot of soldiers that passed to the front in the new field-grey uniform. I now remembered that on that occasion, after I had been dragged to the chief Police Office amid the onslaughts of a violently hostile crowd, a colleague of mine, pointing to the Brandenburger Tor, whispered to me, "Some day we shall enter there as victors!" It was a daring prophecy, but now, as I entered that gateway again, I suppose I could have called myself a victor if I had cared to be mean, inhuman, and ridiculous.

The city lay before me as an example of human mutability and the world's transitory glories. No shouting crowds, no national songs; not a thought of the Kaiser or the Crown Prince; poverty and hunger in place of prosperity, destitution in place of enjoyment; Chancellor, generals and admirals, all gone; not a soldier to be seen; a military nation disarmed; an industrious and inventive people lying passive at the so-called mercy of an implacable enemy—I do not know where in the world's history one could find a parallel to so overwhelming an overthrow, so complete a reversal of fortune, and in so short a time.

As in Vienna, the professional classes were ruined. When people are hungry, they cease to pay for art or music or learning or law or religion or even medicine. Food is the only thing that counts. Here, too, as there, thrift had become a thoughtless imprudence, and "independent incomes" had faded to nothingness. It was pitiful, wherever I went among German cities, to hear of distinguished, hard-working, and highly educated men and women living as long as they could by selling their bits of possessions, and, when the last was sold, turning on the gas or cutting their throats. One day I invited an eminent man who had been German Ambassador in various Courts to lunch at my little hotel, and prepared the very best that expenditure could supply—thick soup, real beef-steak, potatoes, real jam,

real bread and butter, beer up to strength, and coffee—real coffee. His purely physical enjoyment of the food and drink was enough to make the angels weep. It was pitiful to think that the hand of Joy was already at its lips bidding adieu, and that within a few hours all that ecstasy would become but a fading remembrance.

There were four of us, and I suppose the entertainment cost nearly half a crown a head. At that time (February, 1923) the mark had only begun its abysmal descent, but the relation of wages to food prices was the only thing that mattered, or that ever matters much. In the factories of Berlin and other cities I found wages running from 14,000 to 36,000 marks a week. Where coal mines had not suspended work as "passive resistance," the average was about 24,000. A builder who used to get 40 gold marks a week (£2) now got 48,000, worth about 6 shillings. A printer gave the same amounts. A tram-conductor put the purchase value of his wages at 4 gold marks a week. Margarine was everywhere taken as the standard of value, and the price of margarine shifted around 6000 marks a pound. A German miner thus had to work a day and a half to earn a pound of margarine, which an English miner might have earned in half-an-hour. Rationed bread was 650 marks the 4lb. loaf, but only one loaf a week was allowed per family, and unrationed bread, which at first cost 1200 marks a loaf, was rising beyond calculation after the French invasion. Milk, being 750 marks the litre, was beyond hope; sausage was almost as remote, and fresh meat no worker ever thought of. Coal cost 60 marks the pound, and people stayed in bed to keep warm. In the workpeople's houses I found no sheets, and hardly any bedclothes or underclothing. Boots cost 35,000 marks the pair, and children sold their shoes and went barefoot. Children of eight or nine looked like children of five or six, and tuberculosis was rapidly increasing. German economists told me the country might support forty millions on her own resources, without much industrial or foreign trade. The surplus of twenty-five millions was

being exterminated ; the total population would thus sink below the level of the French, and a vital point in M. Poincaré’s desires would be securely gained.

Hunger and wretchedness similarly prevailed in Leipzig, where I stayed on my way to Chemnitz, a centre of smallish industries, chiefly textile. There the women were working the “clocks” upon socks or stockings at two dozen a day for one-third of a pound of margarine, and stitching “fabric gloves” at about six pounds of margarine a week. The “fabric” of the gloves was made of cotton, wrought up to such quality that any layman would have taken it for the finest doeskin. And, as so often happens, its excellence was its ruin ; for in the previous year (July 1st), our Government had excluded the gloves by a high protective tariff, apparently because no English maker could rival their quality. Mr. Asquith had protested in the name of Free Trade and the people who actually wanted the better gloves, but Mr. Asquith was a Liberal and did not count.

Then from the hostile frontiers of what had once been friendly Bohemia, I turned back into the region of the Thüringenwald, so intimately familiar to me forty years before.<sup>1</sup> It is always dangerous to revisit any scene after a long interval. It is sure to induce softening regrets and melancholy reflections ; all the worse if memory brings with it a sorrow’s crown of sorrow. Yet I have heard people wish to return to this world many years after death, just to see how things are going on, or perhaps to feel what it is like to be forgotten. If they wish to try the experiment, it is not difficult. They need only have been at a University and have lived sixty years in all—quite common conditions. Let them return to the University after forty years and the thing is done. The generations of University life are so brief that after forty years one may look upon a world once known, with ten or twelve generations added. One has by that time become a blessed ghost, and can wander about, unknown and almost unseen. One peers into a world that is

<sup>1</sup> See “Changes and Chances,” chapter VI.

new, and yet comprehensible. Against a background of half-remembered associations, such as always throw a benign radiance over the past, one may watch the course of life still moving onward without a pause, and without one's presence. After all, the experience is really encouraging.

Nearly forty years had passed since I was a student in Jena, and, for the first time since then, I was visiting the scene again. Not a living creature remembered me, or even remembered the years that I was there. Except, perhaps, the withered old horse which contrived to crawl with me from the station to the Black Bear Hotel, where our gayest and most luxurious spirits used once to revel in beer. With his whitened eye, that ageing horse did seem to recognise a coeval ; for, in pity for his age, he alone had been spared when all his companions were sacrificed to the expense of fodder. But Haeckel had gone—the great Haeckel, Rector of the University, whose lectures I always attended, not that I knew anything about morphology, but simply in admiration of his fine personality and cheerful manner. The philosopher Liebmann had gone, to solve, as I hoped, those metaphysical problems that he failed to solve for me. The Professor of Literature, whose very name I had forgotten, had gone, except that some sentences of his admirable lectures on Goethe still lingered in my mind. Old Karl Zeiss, the great optician, had gone, and so had his son, to whom I once taught English ; though the Zeiss spirit lingered in the vast optical factory known throughout the world for the perfection of its lenses.

The genius of Zeiss and his partner, Ernest Abbe, who founded the semi-socialistic *Stiftung* for the benefit of their workmen and the whole town, had transformed the surroundings of the beautiful old place. Villas and model dwellings had spread far up the valleys and the familiar hills—the Fuchs Thurm, where we kindled the beacon fires on St. John's Eve ; the Forst, which it was thought an almost heroic exertion for students to climb ; the idyllic Ziegenhain village, famed for its “white beer” ;

and the Landgrafenberg, up which Napoleon marched his Grand Army of 85,000 men in the French invasion that preceded M. Poincaré's. The old grey bridge over the Saale, under which I used to shoot on timber rafts, had given place to a wide structure of yellow stone, and the little inn across the river, where Goethe wrote the "Erlkönig," was obscured. A large new building, also of yellow stone, had been added to the University, but the old building still served, as did an ancient house where I lodged as a student.

In those days I never supposed I should some day come to lecture in the familiar University rooms ; but I had hardly arrived when the "Lector" in modern English invited me to speak to his students in my own tongue, and they appeared to understand all I said. Some of them were women, and there were no women students in my time, though Haeckel once told me of his difficulty in excluding a Russian woman who insisted upon studying medicine. Now there were about 500 women out of the 2700 students, and most of them studied medicine. Of the men, the great majority took one branch or other of the vast subject called "Philosophy," which includes Natural Science. A good many studied Law, a good many Medicine. Only about seventy took Theology. In his opening soliloquy, Faust says with a sigh :

" *Habe nun, ach ! Philosophie,  
Juristerei und Medizin,  
Und leider auch Theologie  
Durchaus studiert, mit heissem Bemühn.*"

That "leider"—"More's the pity!"—appeared to be an opinion shared by the students of to-day.

The student Clubs or Societies were still maintained, for to make a *Verein* is as natural to the Germans as making a committee is to the English. There were the Corps with their red, blue, or variegated caps, still practising duelling with the pointed foils, still forbidden by law, as it always was. But it was I who had the glory of introducing the first real football there, in place of a leather bag stuffed with

straw ; and in Weimar, ten miles away, it was I who introduced tennis. Both were practised with great success by the Jena students until the recent disasters reduced the whole country to poverty, and under the stress of poverty even the members of fashionable Corps were now working with their hands to pay the University expenses, small as those were. Nearly all worked in the Long Vacation, and most in Term-time besides—too exhausting a scheme of life, I thought, as in the American Universities, but likely to promote sympathy with working people. The majority of students were, of course, Nationalists, and their party had naturally increased since the French invasion had taught them that all the promises held out before the Armistice went for scraps of paper, and nothing but violence could avail in the world. At the same time, I was amazed to read placards on the University doors announcing meetings of the “ Academic Democratic Workmen’s Union,” and even of the “ German Pacifist Students’ Club ! ”

In Goethe’s Weimar, too, I walked once more hand in hand with the man who had been so long my master and intimate daily friend. As we visited again his simple Gartenhaus beside the wintry park, and watched the little Ilm still running dark and swift as when “ many an immortal song ” rose from its banks ; gazed at the bronze statue of himself and his friend, standing with clasped hands in front of his old theatre, we continued to converse together, “ as speaks one ghost to another ghost.” I know the worst that can be said against Goethe—his diffusion of interest, his barren wastes of dullness, his lack of self-criticism, his frequent failure to conclude as he had begun. Never mind ! He was a man after my own heart, and, unless I go all the way back to Socrates, I have not met another ghost with whom I so gladly consort.

In Weimar, too, I saw again the old dwelling place of poor Herder, whose services to literature and thought I, in my youth, attempted, quite vainly, to recall.<sup>1</sup> And in his

<sup>1</sup> See “ Herder and his Times ” (1884).

church close by, I saw the huge private pew or box of the famous Grand Dukes, always empty now but still preserved as a symbol of transitory things. So was the Grand Ducal Schloss, in front of which no bodyguard now stood ready to form in line and present arms when the cry "Heraus!" preluded the approach of Grand Ducal blood. It was all encouraging, and yet one could not escape a certain sadness, as when one penetrates the tomb of an Egyptian queen.

More encouraging still was a vast working-men's meeting that I attended in Magdeburg. I had visited the ancient citadel, into the cells and barrack-rooms of which Versailles and the League of Nations had crammed wretched refugee families from Posen and Upper Silesia. I had listened long to the hopes and fears of Oberpräsident Hörsting, who had risen from the labour of an ironsmith to the labour of governing the province. Then one evening I went to the Workmen's Hall to hear Graf Hellmuth von Gerlach, leader of the German Pacifists, as he still is (1928). He spoke well for over an hour, but more interesting to me was the strong protest of a veteran officer, who appealed to German feeling, German national pride, German history, and all that could move the German heart, never, never to attempt negotiations with the treacherous French again, but to endure passively in the sure and certain hope that German honour would at some time be vindicated by a resurrection. Graf von Gerlach, violently pacific, thereupon rushed at the speaker on the platform. The chairman, who had lost one arm in the war, dragged the ardent patriot back to his chair, and amid the wild shouting of the audience, he was hustled from the building. Rather needlessly, as I thought, for he was but a good old officer, all of the good old time. From Hamburg, to which many directors of the Ruhr mines and factories had removed so as to escape the violence and imprisonment by which the French hoped to break down the policy of passive resistance, I was obliged to return to London, where I could more freely congratulate M. Poincaré

upon his success in bringing ruin upon his foes, as well as upon ourselves, who had been his friends.

Throughout that summer (1923), when M. Poincaré's triumph was at its height, I feared that my services in acclaiming his success were at an end. For I was kept quietly at home, bidding an indignant farewell to the *Nation* under its new auspices, writing for Brailsford's *New Leader* and the *Baltimore Sun*, bringing out my "Changes and Chances," visiting once more with intense interest the castles and ancient churches along the Welsh Marches, and moving about in a partially pacified Ireland. Meantime M. Poincaré was advancing from glory to glory. In the hope of breaking down the passive resistance in the Ruhr, one Bürgermeister of its cities after another was fined and imprisoned for terms of years. On Easter Eve (March 31) French troops entered the Krupp works, and fired upon a peaceful crowd of the workers, killing fourteen and wounding sixty. At a trial of the Krupp directors enormous fines were imposed, and some were sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, others to fifteen. The Ruhr and Rhineland were encircled by French outposts, and a customs barrier established between occupied and unoccupied Germany. The complicated railway system in the Ruhr was taken over by the French, and the skilled German railway servants were dismissed and exiled, their places being taken by Frenchmen, who could not work the lines. Over 17,000 men, women, and children depending on railway work were thus thrown upon the rest of Germany without work or livelihood. Schools in the Ruhr were requisitioned, teachers expelled, and nearly 130,000 children deprived of the education which Germans estimate so highly. Over 5000 German workmen were imprisoned, many flogged and starved. A rigid curfew was imposed. Barbed-wire entanglements were erected round the Ruhr district, and no one allowed to pass on pain of death, without special and rare permission. Banks were openly plundered. Brothels, with a suitable number of women, were ordered to be supplied

for the French troops in the cities, and other supplies requisitioned. German and English Liberal papers were rigidly excluded, the *Manchester Guardian* being, of course, among the number.

Finally, the Separatist Movement for the forcible creation of a Rhineland Republic was encouraged by the French authorities to the utmost of their power. Hardened criminals were raked from the German gaols ; bullies were collected from notorious brothels ; every species of scoundrel was enlisted, armed, and paid to resist the German police and the indignant population, the French troops coming to the assistance of the Separatists whenever they were in difficulties. Trade stopped. All Europe suffered. Next to Germany herself, England perhaps suffered most. Speaking in the House of Commons at the end of February, Mr. Bonar Law had called the Ruhr "the jugular vein of German industry." M. Poincaré during the summer succeeded in cutting the vein, and the enemy was bleeding to death. But upon his former Allies, the victors in the war, a slow death was approaching, too. The German mark by mid-September had fallen to 1,250,000,000 to the £1 sterling, and it was still to fall lower. What trade was possible with the German people ? Where were reparations to come from ? Even international thieving could not scrape them up.

By the end of September M. Poincaré was able to congratulate himself upon accomplishing another feat : he was killing off the enemy's population. For the third quarter of 1923 the infant mortality of Germany rose 21 per cent in comparison with the rate of the same quarter in the previous year, while the birthrate dropped 15 per cent. In face of all these evidences of success, it was no wonder that M. Poincaré contemptuously disregarded the strong Notes of protest forwarded to him by Lord Curzon in July, and again, in still stronger terms, on August 11th. This " slaughter of the innocents " hastened the political victory, for, overwhelmed by the utter ruin of the people in trade, in livelihood, and in life, towards the end of September

(the 26th) the German Government, under the firm influence of Herr Stresemann, declared passive resistance at an end and the French Premier's triumph reached its height. It was true that, speaking in London just four weeks later, General Smuts used the ominous words : "Four or five years ago they were singing their songs of victory ; to-day they were all—victor and vanquished alike—marching to certain and inevitable defeat." But M. Poincaré and his scanty supporters in England raised again the hymn of praise, the *Te Deum* of their triumph, and if the destruction of a helpless enemy in peace time can be accounted a triumph their exultant strains were justified.

Suddenly, at the end of October, I was enabled to add my voice to the pæans of the French victory, for the *Manchester Guardian* sent me to "the occupied area" in Germany in place of Cecil Squire Sprigge, who was anxious to return home. In Cologne I found a distinguished little band of correspondents : Sprigge himself awaiting my arrival, always alert, perceptive, an excellent linguist, and courageous, as he has since proved when serving the same great paper in Rome under the Fascists ; my old colleagues, George Renwick, Beach Thomas and Percival Phillips (French in sympathy, so far as he had sympathy at all, and did not maintain the detached indifference of the Epicurean gods) ; and Colonel Kennard, formerly of the 5th Dragoon Guards, but lately transformed by Christian Science into a character as different as can be imagined from the typical military man ; he was then acting as correspondent for the *Monitor*, so admirable a paper, and so difficult to serve. For *The Times* I found an independent and enterprising man, G. E. R. Gedye, who soon afterwards gained high reputation by exposing the behaviour of the French and their Separatists in the Palatinate. And lastly, as a new and welcome figure among us correspondents, there was Evelyn Sharp, working for the *Daily Herald*, with all her passionate understanding of the "human side" of war.

It was indeed a state of war, if that can be called a war in

which, to imitate the Horatian adage, “you beat, and I am beaten.” Even the British force centralised at Cologne was almost besieged. To the comfort of all Germans, it still maintained its position there under Sir Alexander Godley, and upheld its fine reputation for justice, good-nature, and decent behaviour. From our circumscribed sphere all Separatists were carefully excluded, and within its limits none of the exactions enforced by the French in the Ruhr was practised. But our frontiers were surrounded by French and Belgian outposts, and our authorities, both military and civil, lived in perpetual fear of finding our supplies and communications cut. The open support of the Separatists by France with money and arms made even General Godley doubt whether a Rhine Republic was not now inevitable and, what was more ominous, even the stalwart Bürgermeister Adenauer was shaken, and began to question whether it might now be worth while to purchase peace by some temporary agreement with the common enemies of his country.

It seemed to me just possible that France might have gained her point of erecting a Government under her own influence along the length of the Rhine, if only she had not enlisted for her purpose such an intolerable pack of scoundrels. At Düren on the road to Aachen (Aix) I found a gang of them in possession, supported by French Moroccan troops, issuing thousands of false notes, nominally on French credit, and strongly fortifying themselves, because, as one of their leaders frankly admitted, they had “the whole population” against them. At Aix the Separatists were defended by Belgian troops with machine-guns, and in their defence some of the German police had been killed a day or two before. Here, too, as in Cologne, I found the British name winning popularity; chiefly owing to the courageous energy of our Vice-Consul, Mr. Faen, who, by his own account, appeared to have sprung from the blood of nearly all European races, but in the end declared himself Irish.

In Trier, the ancient Roman city on the Moselle, the Separatists had hoisted their green, white, and red flag on

the Rathaus, and when the populace tried to remove it, the French officers ordered the Spahis to charge the crowd. The French garrison numbered 20,000, all Africans with the exception of a few French officers; some were Algerians, some Moroccans, or what the people called "Arabs." Most of them were infantry, but a large force of cavalry, known as "Spahis," swaggered about in large and flowing scarlet robes, wearing a peculiar head-dress with a round, white dome on the top, for which reason the people called them "Beehives." A few pitch-black Senegalese completed the civilising forces, and, at the demand of the French authorities, fifty special brothels had been supplied for the comfort of the Africans. The girls detailed for this service were Germans, French, and Luxemburgers, and every Saturday afternoon the representatives of French civilisation waited in long queues outside the fifty doors.

The Bürgermeister of Trier and 8000 citizens had been expelled to wander away destitute into the unoccupied parts of their country, the French retaining all their furniture for use or sale. Close upon half the working population were unemployed (over 4000 out of 10,000). The starvation was so sharp that I found a captain's widow going from house to house, begging not for potatoes, but for potato parings. All English Liberal papers were excluded, and from the other papers Mr. Baldwin's speech against Separatism was carefully cut out. No word in favour of England was permitted, and censorship was enforced by gangs of cut-throat Separatists who attacked the journalists with revolvers and broke up the printing plant. For the enjoyment of all these blessings the French exacted from the city a weekly payment of 180,000 French francs.

At Coblenz I called upon Lord Kilmarnock, our representative upon the Rhineland Commission, which had its head-quarters there. Natural diplomacy held him silent upon the action of France in defying our country's dissent, but he openly praised the Belgians for having just withdrawn their support of the Separatists in Aix. Close beside his

office was the Separatist head-quarters in the old Schloss, and there I had some converse with their leader Matthes, a powerful and remorseless person, born to lead scoundrels, and leading them with obvious effect. About ten days later, further up the Rhine, I found the beautiful old town of Andernach lying dead under the invasion of Separatists, who had fallen upon her less than a month before, had plundered the shops, stolen the motors, slaughtered the oxen and pigs, annexed the coal, and stopped the factories. By the Rhineland Commission the bearing of arms had been prohibited, but the Separatist "Commissar" openly told me that at least ten per cent of his followers were fully armed, and no one cared what the English on the Commission said about it.

- Who then supplied the arms ? Every child in the Rhineland knew.

At the Separatist head-quarters I was informed that throughout the town and neighbourhood absolute tranquillity prevailed. A few provisions had been requisitioned, but what then ? Young men must live, and they had paid for everything with signed promises, as every army does on the march. The Commissar and his pseudo-Bürgermeister were grieved to the heart to hear that everyone in the town had been thrown out of work ; for they boasted themselves philanthropists and democrats of an advanced type. In proof of their solicitude for humanity they had set the unemployed to work at cutting down trees upon a neighbouring hill. Always anxious to discover a solution for unemployment (the most difficult problem before my own country), I proceeded to the scene of this economic experiment, and watched the poor creatures—professional men, shopkeepers, and factory hands—sawing at any tree-trunk that came handy, beginning three or four feet from the ground, where sawing was easier, and at last pushing the tree down, so as to leave a stump with long and jagged splinters. I remembered the shattered woods of Thiepval and recognised that the results of philanthropic labour very closely resembled the results of war.

But badly as the Rhine fared, the Ruhr fared worse. One might compare the Ruhr district to our Black Country, but it is larger in extent, being a rough ellipse, some thirty-five miles one way by twenty-five the other. Within the ellipse there is still a good deal of agricultural land, and one comes upon old-fashioned German villages with wooden houses and high-pitched roofs, where peasants still cultivate their bits of field. The Ruhr river itself, which meanders through low hills along the southern part of the district, till it issues into the Rhine at Ruhrtort, is not a foul and sluggish stream, like the rivers in our own manufacturing counties, but to the end remains clean and swift, as a mountain river should be.

Otherwise, there is not much charm about the region, and no prettiness. Like the Black Country or parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire, it is one of those unhappy districts where man has made a desolation and called it wealth. Chimneys, pit-stacks, and factories rise wherever one looks, and in peace-time the air is heavy with smoke by day, and at night from hundreds of furnaces one sees spectral flames pouring out. Mines and factories are connected by a complicated system of railways. Some of the works have "colonies" or model villages for their workpeople. Schools and hospitals are organised as only Germany will. The workers themselves come of a tough and independent stock, proud of their works, rather contemptuous of other people who cannot show such a quantity of mines, factories, and smoke, and, like Yorkshiremen, they like to keep themselves to themselves.

While I was in Essen and the other chief cities of the district, 95 per cent of the mines were idle, and the factories and railways hardly worked at all. Passive resistance had ceased some weeks before, but the skilled Westphalians had been exiled or imprisoned, and the substitutes imported from France, Poland, Belgium, and Czecho-Slovakia could not understand the mines or factories, still less the railways. It was a marvel that, through Essen at the heart of the

district the French now succeeded in passing 8 per cent of the former passenger trains, and 3 per cent of the goods trains. All along the lines trucks stood in hundreds rotting, and if they had been originally loaded with earth or straw or vegetables, they showed a fine crop of grass and weeds on the top. They looked like little gardens, and a long row of them beside the main street to the station at Essen daily delighted my sense of the picturesque. Goods, however, had been known to reach Berlin in ten days, and our Vice-Consul, having to travel by train owing to a weight of luggage, succeeded in making Essen from Cologne (about 40 miles) in ten hours. Having exiled the experienced railwaymen, the French since the cessation of passive resistance had allowed about one-fifth of them to return. It was a sign of grace.

In passing through Düsseldorf one day on my way to Essen, I saw the people storming the provision shops and flinging everything out upon the streets. In Essen itself that day, the entrances to the poorest quarters and to the Krupp works were blocked with French troops, armoured cars, machine-guns, and all. Shots were fired, apparently on both sides, and two workmen were killed on the spot, twenty wounded. A crowd had been demanding relief or higher wages, but no one knew what relief or wages might be worth from hour to hour. One Wednesday I got only 600,000,000,000 marks to the pound sterling. The following Monday I got 2,200,000,000,000. A woman at night would think she had enough millions of marks to buy a pound of potatoes next morning, but when morning came she might have only enough for half a pound. Nearly the whole Ruhr district with its six million souls and bodies has to live on food imported from the country, and even if the food could get through the French barriers, the peasants refused to sell when the mark, unstable as water, was running down from nothing to nothing.

Krupp's somehow contrived daily to get a few bags of potatoes in, and in the street outside my window big crowds

began to gather long before daylight, and stood there waiting in orderly queues till after midday, in the hope of having a few potatoes weighed out into their little sacks when they were admitted, half a dozen at a time, through one of the iron gates. As to relief, an unemployed miner told me that in the previous week he had been given 8.5 billion marks for himself, his wife, and eight children, and I calculated the purchasing value of that dole was about seven shillings. Unfortunately, the families were usually large. From six to nine children was a common size, for the Essen workers had been prosperous and regular, and, while prosperity may reduce the birthrate of the middle classes, it seems to act otherwise with the steady "Aristocrats of Labour." On every side I heard of rickets, bow-legs, crooked backs, want of blood, wasting, and what else might be expected. No shirts, no bedding, no underclothing, no shoes, no coals, though we stood on one of the richest coalfields in the world—and all the time almost without pause, it rained when it was not snowing. Our unyielding Quakers issued relief from their quiet little house. But what could that have done ?

Krupp's had discharged 2000 hands, and were working at about half power, under an agreement with the French. The 40,000 workers left were doing some 30 hours a week, and, watching their labour, I marvelled at the versatility of mankind. The Krupp works extend five miles in one direction, and one mile across. They used to make guns of all sizes and for all nations, but now, instead of guns, they were making ploughshares, locomotives (twenty-one had lately been appropriated by the French), ready-reckoners, motor-scooters, dredgers, reaping machines, and stainless steel plates for artificial teeth. The French said the works could easily be converted into use for war again. It was quite possible, but in that case whose would be the fault ? On every side the inhabitants of the Ruhr were scorned and insulted. At the stations their packages and baskets were turned out and spied into (once, but not twice, a French

official tried that treatment on me). They could not visit a dying relation across the barriers. Not more than three were allowed to converse upon the street at one time. The usual censorship silenced all truth. At the big town of Dortmund I heard the French bugle-band sounding the glory of the French Commander-in-Chief with a scornful defiance that would have maddened any but the patient and pitifully obedient German people. The smallest offence against the military regulations was heavily punished by a Court-Martial of three officers who sat in judgment without interval. But what were the military regulations ? Like the mark or the love of God, they were new every morning. Among the highly educated classes books could not be purchased, music could not be heard, conversation turned perpetually on prices, exchange, and the next meal. All savings and investments had of course disappeared. I came to know their icy rooms, their starveling meals, and their threadbare clothes, turned till they could be turned no more.

Early in December a sort of truce was at last patched up between Krupp's and the " M.I.C.U.M. " (*Mission Interalliée de Contrôle des Usines et des Mines*). The terms were hard almost to destruction, but at least they allowed many miners to find work again. About the same time the German Government declared a kind of capital levy by ordaining the " Rentenmark " to be worth one billion of the current marks, which were rapidly wiped out.

On the anniversary of the Ruhr invasion they published the following official statistics : The country, up to the cessation of passive resistance, had lost between 175 and 200 million pounds sterling owing to suspended production, dislocation of transport and posts, financing of imports from abroad as substitutes for Ruhr production, commandeering by the French of goods, plant, and rolling-stock, confiscation of cash, and suspension of all revenue from the Ruhr and Rhineland ; the dislocation of all German trade and life in the unoccupied parts was not included ; the number of Germans killed was 132 ; officials and workmen expelled

39,524 ; their families exiled with them, 106,134 ; out of over 5000 Germans imprisoned by the French 2021 were still in prison ; schools up to 209 for 127,000 children had been commandeered and closed ; of newspapers 173 had been suppressed. Of the " invisible " losses to the mind, spirit, peace, and goodwill of the German people no statistical tables were possible. As in the former war, the German people owned their defeat, and in the future they perceived no hope. Unless indeed one might read hope in the concluding words of an article upon these lamentable results in the Berlin *Vorwärts*. " Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen," it wrote, " listen to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald ! " The advice was wise, but in February, 1924, it was described by one of our chief Liberal papers as " quaint." At the moment of M. Poincaré's supreme victory no doubt it sounded quaint, and another of our guiding papers bade us " take off our hats to France." All take off their hats to indisputable success.

## CHAPTER XII

### " LABOUR "

*" What admiration I feel for that class of men which is called the lower, but which in God's sight is certainly the highest. Among them we find all the virtues together—moderation, contentment, uprightness, good faith, joy over the smallest blessing, harmlessness, innocence, patience—but I must not lose myself in exclamations ! "*

GOETHE'S Letter to Frau von Stein, December, 1777.

*" Lifting his huge tumbler of Gukguk, and for a moment lowering his tobacco-pipe, he (professor Teufelsdröckh) stood up in full coffeehouse (it was Zur grünen Gans, the largest in Weissnichtwo, where all the Virtuosity, and nearly all the intellect of the place assembled of an evening) ; and there, with low, soul-stirring tone, and the look truly of an angel, though whether of a white or black one might be dubious, proposed this toast : Die Sache der Armen in Gottes und Teufels Namen (The Cause of the Poor, in Heaven's name and ——'s) ! "*

CARLYLE : " Sartor Resartus " ; chapter III (1831)

**W**RITING about the situation in Europe in 1924, Mr. Frank Simonds, wisest of external observers, has said :

" Of all the figures who appeared on the stage of post-war Europe, none was more transient nor more important than J. Ramsay MacDonald. His stay in office lasted much less than a year. His actual power was always narrowly limited, not merely because his was a minority government, but also because, within itself, it was sharply split between the moderates and the extremists, between the former Liberals and the ' wild men ' from Clydeside. Yet within this period, which was measured by weeks, MacDonald changed the whole atmosphere of European relations. Indeed, his achievement justifies the claim that it was a pacifist who at last led the way to the restoration of peace in Europe.

" In reality, limited as he was by poor health, by an excessive sensitiveness, and by something of the same inability to associate considerable men with his undertakings

which characterized Wilson, MacDonald proved, nevertheless, to be one of the greatest of British foreign ministers.

"Moreover, the supreme service of Ramsay MacDonald lay in the fact that he had not merely created a new atmosphere in Europe but he had also revived Continental confidence in British good faith."<sup>1</sup>

I have quoted that judgment of an independent and foreign observer—one who was pro-French by sympathy and certainly had no inborn attraction to the Labour Party—lest it should be thought that anything I may say to the credit of the first Labour Prime Minister is biased by my own party feelings or by my own personal regard. As to party feelings, I cannot remember that I ever had any. I have always been an "opportunist," supporting any measure that appeared to me excellent, no matter what party advocated it, though as a rule it was a "Progressive" measure that appeared to me excellent. But, like most people, I have been much impressed by fine personality, and as a boy I came under the enchantment of Disraeli's poetic and imaginative nature. Like him, I loved the beauty of the old English country mansions, the great parks with their immemorial oaks, the wild moorlands where one might hope to catch a glimpse of a red deer or other wild animal. Under the influence of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold, those masters of my youth, I looked to our aristocracy to redeem us from the commonplace of Liberalism by their sense of nobility's obligations or by the charm of their habitual manners. This expectation was fostered by an admiration that varied directly with my ignorance and the distance of my prospect.

And next, towards the end of my time in Oxford, partly in reaction against the prim self-satisfaction of that too beautiful University, I exposed myself to the full weight of Mr. Gladstone's gigantic personality, now the ready butt of every epigrammatic whipster. How could I avoid

<sup>1</sup> "How Europe made Peace without America," pp. 276, 277; and p. 315.

admiration for so comprehensive an intellect, so fervent an enthusiast for national freedom, so genuine a seeker after beauty, no matter how mistaken his critical judgments might be ? When I first came to London, he was leading, at the age of seventy-five, the greatest revolution of his life—that crusade for Irish Home Rule which he may have foreseen would ruin his own political career. Yet he led it, and what generous nature could refuse to follow in his train ? Wealthy Liberals, with their hideous big business and hideous little chapels, inspired me with variegated feelings, only partially deferential. But gradually, in spite of my Conservative tastes and revolutionary convictions, I came to regard myself as a member of the Liberal Party, and at the beginning of the century joined the National Liberal Club, not so much attracted by its cookery, the splendour of its building, or the marble staircase running up between walls of yellow glazed tiles like a cleanly lavatory's, as by the noble library (partly Mr. Gladstone's legacy), the quiet prospect over the river, and the knowledge that, whenever I entered its precincts, I could count upon meeting no one I knew.

It was my misfortune that, though it thus possessed all the advantages I desired in a Club, I was compelled to leave it just after the election of 1924, when the short-lived Labour Government fell. It is the custom of the Club to paste up in the smoking-room the result of each election as it comes in. The room is crowded with members, who greet each announcement with silence or applause, and I noticed that every time that a Conservative defeated a Labour candidate (58 times in all) the applause was greater than on any other occasion, except perhaps when a Liberal candidate defeated a Labour man (9 times in all). It is true that Liberals had some reason for feeling sore at the results, for they lost 103 seats to the Conservatives, and 16 to Labour, having their own representation reduced to the comparatively insignificant figure of 40. But the behaviour of the Club members proved to me that my vague hopes of

seeing Liberals and Labour men united into a steadily Progressive party were vain. The Club Secretary most generously urged me to remain as one of a group which he called the “ spear-head ” of advanced Liberalism, but the mocking cheers that greeted the defeat of the Labour Party to which I was personally attached still sounded in my mind, and I left the Club, with a regret that I still feel for the beauty of its terrace, the satisfaction of its dining-rooms, and the somnolent silence of its more serious compartments.

My connection with the Labour Party had, in fact, begun long before their fall after that brief spell of office without power. Though I had always felt admiration for Mr. Asquith’s scholarly mind and classical restraint in speech; though I pitied him deeply in the cruel conflict between his own quietly progressive nature and the appalling decision for war; and sympathised with him still more deeply when he fell as Zimri’s victim, I felt that the Liberal precepts to which he clung were becoming obsolete, and there was little in his supplanter’s brilliant and changeful personality to restore confidence in the Liberal faith. I may have been influenced also by the deplorable mishandling of the Suffrage question and of the Suffragettes themselves by the Liberal Party during their prolonged term of office before the war, and I still regard their subsequent misfortunes as a kind of “ judgment ” upon them for their violent breaches of the principles which they boasted. In any case, when the Labour Party conceded the point that a “ brain-worker ” might rank beside a “ manual worker ” as a member of the Party, I felt that the spirit of the time was drawing me into their number. I heartily agreed with Massingham in his tendency “ to the Left ”; I welcomed, as I have said before, my friend Brailsford’s offer to me to write every week for his *New Leader*, though I did not formally join the Independent Labour Party (“ I.L.P.”) of which it was the professed organ; and when the election of December, 1923, showed the Labour Party to be second in the House of Commons,

with 191 members (as against 258 Conservatives and 158 Liberals), I joined with those who urged Ramsay MacDonald to take office, if mainly not to disappoint his followers in the country, and to show that Labour was capable of government even though obliged to lean upon the reed of Liberal support.

There were plenty of reasons for hesitation, the strongest being the problem of the unemployed. For if the Party that stood for the working people could not come to the relief of their most urgent need, and alleviate the most terrible apprehension that can haunt men, women, and children, what reliance upon a Labour Government could working people place ? I recognised the difficulties of Ramsay MacDonald’s position, but was none the less relieved when he announced to us at a *New Leader* lunch that, if the King sent for him, he would undertake the task. The refusal of Mr. Asquith to desecrate Liberal principles by concluding an active coalition with the Conservatives, among whom Mr. Baldwin had casually propagated the heresy of Protection, settled the matter, and on February 12th, 1924, from the Press Gallery of the stuffy and paralysing House of Commons, I witnessed the first appearance of Labour men upon the Government Bench.

Like most patriotic people, I had always regarded with decent respect the unknown magnificence of that Bench, no matter which Party sat upon it. Nearly all had made themselves great, though some were born great, and one or two might have had greatness thrust upon them. Their titles, their wealth, their responsible solemnity made them unapproachable to a mere spectator. But now, as I looked along the crowded row, I recognised nearly all as acquaintances, and many as old friends. Before some I felt the sense of inferiority that I always feel in the presence of men who have confronted poverty and themselves toiled at the hard business of ordinary life. Two of those Ministers had worked in cotton mills ; one had been born to weaving in Yorkshire ; one had been an iron-moulder ; another

had driven locomotives ; three had worked in coal mines ; one, a feminine figure, eloquent and wise, for whom there was hardly room on the crowded Bench, had been a shop assistant. Most of the great branches of our productive work were represented ; nearly all except shipping and agriculture. Before such people I felt ashamed, as I long had felt, of the littleness of my literary education and of the easy-going, sheltered life which I could not have enjoyed but for my birth in a fairly well-to-do family.

To my astonishment I found that this sense of inferiority, so natural to me, was not shared by many of the still higher classes, among whom one would have expected to find it even more pronounced. For the first week or two I heard open expressions of fear, horror, and disgust. The wits and "social successes" who, in the words of the Psalmist, grin like a dog and run about the West End, not only sneered at our new Government's clothes, but foretold national calamity and the collapse of our Imperial grandeur. They prognosticated the inevitable fall of the heavens and the shares, and when the heavens remained fresh and strong in their accustomed position, while shares actually rose, the melancholy natural to disappointed prophets was but partially tempered by the consolations of pecuniary stability. Looking again at the Labour list of Ministers, they took courage in perceiving that the one who held supreme authority in law had once reorganised the Army, and laid the foundations of victory ; that another, having helped to found the Fabian Society, and so proclaimed "the inevitability of gradualness," would keep things comfortable for their lifetime at least ; that another, also one of the Fabian founders, had served as a Colonial Governor, and so would stand no nonsense in India ; that another possessed unequalled knowledge of the Balkans, and could be trusted as Minister of Agriculture to leave alone the parks and pheasant-preserves of England's blessed plot ; that another, though vehement and inclined to educate the poor above that state of life to which it *had* pleased God to call them, was

an educated man himself and sprung from an old Whig family ; that another, though heady, was no silly pacifist, but had done good service in the war ; that another, though shamelessly pacifist and connected with Quakers, was harmless, and could be counted upon to maintain law if not order ; that another, being obviously a well-dressed gentleman, and having won high favour at a foreign Court, would not let the Air Force down ; and, best of all, that the Navy was safe in the hands of a born Lord, who had been Viceroy of India and captain of the Oxford Cricket Eleven. Having made these observations, the superior classes were justified in taking courage. In the Labour programme there was little mention of that horrifying “ Capital Levy.” Property might, after all, be safe. In Capek’s “ Insect Play ” we had lately been shown a beetle rolling his “ little pile,” his darling hoard of dung, patting it, cherishing it, smelling it, just before another beetle came and rolled it away. The threat of that other beetle seemed no longer formidable.

But what about the remarkable man who on that 12th day of February, 1924, stood before the House of Commons as the first of Labour Prime Ministers, and, with fine and rather solemn voice, spoke of “ confidence ” rather than “ tranquillity,” of attempts to stand upon a friendly footing with France without bullying Germany, of the necessary recognition of Russia, of unemployment not to be cured by mere palliatives, and of the Government’s intention to be economic and scientific in dealing with material capital, but equally economic and scientific in dealing with human capital ? I had known Ramsay MacDonald off and on for nearly forty years, and had carefully followed his career from the time when he lived in Bloomsbury among a peculiar Society whose two main rules were supposed to be (1) to live a perfect life, and (2) to subscribe half a crown a year, the second rule being harder to observe than the first. Like most of his Ministers, he had learnt in the school of life to suffer poverty, and, like most Scotsmen, he had recognised its disadvantages. Step by step he had worked

his way up, for many years in association with the high aims and lovingkindness of the enthusiastic woman whom he married. Some called him vain, but in that respect I had not observed much difference between him and other politicians, actors, novelists, poets, officers, clergy, and men or women. Some said he had from the first played steadily for his own hand, persistently scheming for the attainment of his present position. Ambition may exist, I suppose, in a Socialist as in a member of less idealistic Parties, but it is hard to imagine an ambitious schemer denouncing the war from the beginning, refusing office under the War Ministry, refusing to support even his own Labour associates in their war services and propaganda. In February, 1924, almost ten years had passed since the beginning of the war, and for the first four of those years he had been detested, reviled, calumniated, and despised as the most unpopular man in the whole country, with the possible exception of my other friend E. D. Morel. Time does sometimes bring its revenges, but only the most malignant of his opponents or intimate enemies could thereafter hint at insincerity or calculated ambition.

Another charge was more difficult to answer. He was rather rich in nicknames : “ Ramsay,” “ Mac,” “ J.R.M.,” “ Our Great Leader” (with an ironic emphasis on the “ Great,” as pronounced by the intimate enemies above mentioned). And I like to think that nicknames (of which I have had so many since childhood that my Christian name has never been used) imply a certain geniality, a cordial and familiar nature, inclined to sport. As a Scotsman, Ramsay MacDonald is inclined to the difficult and unproductive sport of golf, and I know him as a fine walker ; but I doubt if anyone has ever thought him genial, cordial, or familiar. There is something aloof in his nature, as though his spirit dwelt alone in an unapproachable shrine of his being. That loneliness may arise from the kind of shyness which induces shyness in others. Or, since many called him a Mystic, it may come from a Mysticism that I do not understand. I

am never quite clear what a Mystic is, but I imagine a man with some hidden power, endowed with a spiritual vision reaching beyond the perception of common mankind. It may well be that a Highlander of mountain birth and religious nurture possesses that vision, and the consciousness of so incalculable a possession may seclude a man from ordinary mortals who possess no vision at all. But when the worst was said, even by members of his own Party, Ramsay MacDonald retained that inestimable gift of “ personality ” which defies analysis or carping blame. Reverently as I stood before many other of our leaders, I could not imagine anyone else so fitted by nature, training, and travel to take the lead.

At a Party reception given by Noel Buxton in the Hyde Park Hotel the night before the first Labour Parliament opened, an observant woman remarked to me “ At any rate, we have the handsomest of all Prime Ministers.” In that matter, women are the judges, and one can only hope that they base their judgment upon character expressed in appearance. More significant was her subsequent remark to Frank Simonds, the American journalist : “ You know, I suppose, that you are present at the beginning of a new epoch ! ” The words were ironic, in mockery of a common phrase employed by the Labour papers at the time. But Frank Simonds replied, I think without irony, though he has an ironic mind : “ It is like the birth of a new Christianity ! ” And she answered, “ I hope it will be more successful than the old ! ” Indeed, we felt something of that “ new epoch ” in the air. Even Mr. Baldwin recognised it when, speaking on the same day in acknowledgment of his re-election as Leader of his Party, he said : “ The Labour Party is pervaded by a feeling which sends the workers of that Party to canvass, to do propaganda, and to conduct the business of elections without profit or reward.”

The attitude of all Christian Powers and many Christian Bishops had made it doubtful whether Christianity had much concern with promoting peace among men, but under Ramsay MacDonald the “ new Christianity ” certainly

tended towards peace in Europe. Within a few weeks, or even days, he changed the whole atmosphere of European relations as Frank Simonds said in the passage quoted above, and he changed it by promoting peace. By mere friendliness of tone he set the country again upon a tolerable footing even with the obdurate M. Poincaré, and when M. Poincaré was succeeded by M. Herriot in May, the friendliness became still more cordial. The Conference of London to consider the Dawes Scheme of Reparations met in July ; the German delegates came over, and by the middle of August a fairly satisfactory agreement was concluded, by which the French promised to evacuate the Ruhr within a year, and Dortmund at once. The Dawes Scheme meantime was to proceed.

Even before Parliament assembled in February Ramsay MacDonald had informed the Soviet Republics that Great Britain now recognised them as the *de jure* Government of what was once the Russian Empire, and requested them to send delegates for a Conference. At this Conference, which met in London in the middle of April, the Prime Minister, after stating its main objects, urged the Russians not to let themselves be influenced by attacks made upon them in this country, any more than he was influenced by attacks made upon him by Russians, such as a recent violent onslaught by Zinovieff, the President of the Third International in Moscow. The reference is important as partly explaining the apparent indifference with which MacDonald at first regarded the "Zinovieff letter" which was the main cause of his defeat in the following October. After negotiations that appeared interminable, as any conversation with Russians is likely to appear to the English mind, a draft Treaty was at last signed in early August—a Commercial Treaty, a general Treaty, and proposals for an indeterminate loan when certain conditions had been fulfilled. It may be said that MacDonald's overthrow was ultimately due rather to this Treaty with the Soviets and the proposed loan than even to the "Campbell case" and the "Zinovieff letter" ; but at the time it seemed another step towards

peace to all except those who would remain the sworn enemies of a Soviet Government, no matter what terms might be proposed. A third step was MacDonald's personal attendance at the Assembly of the League of Nations in September, when he delivered a speech upon the proposals for peace and disarmament that encouraged the whole League to acquire some confidence in the reality of its existence and its powers.

In these triumphs for the cause of peace I could, of course, take no personal part, beyond applauding our Foreign Secretary by speaking and writing wherever I got the chance. But I have sometimes wondered whether it would not have saved catastrophe in the end if Noel Buxton had been given the Foreign Office, acting in close co-operation with the Prime Minister, who in that case would have been left free to adjust the turbulent differences within his own Party. His childhood and youth in the Essex fields had fitted Noel Buxton for his Agricultural Ministry, but he knew quite as much about Europe as about cows and ploughs. With Arthur Ponsonby—a man devoted to peace, in spite of experience in diplomacy—as Under Secretary at his side, he would have served well, and possibly the error of the “Campbell case” might have been avoided. For if it was an error for Sir Patrick Hastings as Attorney-General to charge Mr. Campbell with publishing “incitement to mutiny” in the *Workers' Weekly*, it was a greater error for the Prime Minister to compel his Attorney-General to withdraw the charge on flimsy excuses because his Left wing raised an outcry.

The task of infusing the spirit of peace into embittered nations and impatient idealists at the same time exceeds the strength of any one man, and it was largely for want of personal contact with his own supporters that suspicions of the Prime Minister's deliberation in advancing the Socialist cause began to grow among the enthusiastic advocates of “Socialism in Our Time.” These suspicions were, unhappily, destined to increase. For MacDonald, being by nature

moderate, by experience opportunist, and abhorring the violence and bloodshed proclaimed as an inevitable stage by the Marxist doctrinaires of revolution, recognised that he had to guide the course of progress among an ancient people, deeply rooted in tradition, rigidly conservative of their habits, and proud of the freedom won in so many centuries of struggle and sacrifice. The resolutions carried at Labour Conferences (as in London in June of the previous year) proved to him that the majority of his supporters regarded Marxism or Communism as a disruptive force unsuited to the nature of a country which still refused to reject democracy as an obsolete and putrefying corpse. Even though they belonged to the "advanced party," and the Russian revolution was by many hailed as the furthest step in advance, English working people would not accept an oligarchic tyranny, a police tyranny, and an Imperialist tyranny as essential to the well-being of their own race. The stream of virulent abuse poured upon Ramsay MacDonald and his Ministers by Zinovieff and other leaders of the Russian oligarchy failed in its purpose of either alarming or ingratiating the Labour Party as a whole, though there were some who heard in it the echo of their own thoughts, and others who felt bound to support the Russian Soviets as a vanguard behind which they must not be found loitering.

The "Zinovieff letter," whether genuine or forged, did not surprise me. Everyone, however slightly acquainted with the Marxist doctrine, knew that the Soviets felt bound to instigate a general revolution—a "planetary revolution"—and that our country would be their first objective as being their strongest obstacle. Karl Marx, labouring at Blue Books under the stifling dome of the British Museum, had compounded a disturbing history of British Industrialism, but he knew little of the British people. Lenin knew more, and he foresaw that England would be the last country to emulate the Russian methods. But even Lenin did not realise that nothing would stir the English working man to bloody

revolution but starvation or Prohibition. Still less did Zinovieff perceive the British indifference to theoretic phrases, and the British objection to foreign dictation. Since the further revelations made by Mr. Marlowe in the *Observer* of March 4, 1928, I am inclined to think the letter may have been a forgery, but I still do not regard the question of forgery or genuineness as one of great importance. For there was nothing unusual, nothing unexpected about the letter. Everyone knew that as President of the Communist International (commonly called the “Third International”) in Moscow, Zinovieff detested MacDonald and denounced the Labour Party. In the previous April, as I noticed above, MacDonald had himself drawn the attention of the Russian delegates to these feelings and expressions. He had, none the less, continued to work for a Treaty with Russia, because he knew it would improve British trade, and he hoped it would tend to relax the outstanding tension in Europe. But neither he nor anyone else who knew the temper and objects of the Third International’s President could have been surprised at a letter which called upon the British Communist Party “to stir up the masses of the British proletariat,” “to keep close observation over the leaders of the Labour Party,” “to struggle against the inclinations to compromise which are embedded among the majority of British workmen, against the ideas of evolution and peaceful extermination of capital,” “to have cells in all the units of the troops,” and so on—all with a view to “armed warfare,” “armed insurrection.” Forged or not, those are just the incitements and doctrinaire phrases that might be expected from a Russian of Zinovieff’s temperament. To me there are still only two unexplained points of interest: (1) How the Foreign Office came by a copy (only a copy) of the letter, and (2) How some four or five people came by a copy of that copy, and were able to betray it to Mr. Marlowe for use in the *Daily Mail* of Saturday, October 25, 1924.

By a mere coincidence, I had a distant and casual

connection with that ordinary but fatal document. On October 10 (the day after the Dissolution owing to the Labour Government's defeat on the Campbell case), Brailsford rang me up to say that MacDonald had asked that I should accompany him on his tour through England in preparation for the election due on the 29th. On the 14th I met him at Charles Trevelyan's election hall in Newcastle, where he had a reception such as English people always give to courageous defeat. Next morning I sat upon my suit-case at the entrance to the High Level bridge, till the car came past with MacDonald and Lord Arnold, and we made the rest of the journey together. That day we drove through Durham, Darlington, Ripon, Harrogate, Leeds, Dewsbury, Spen Valley, Huddersfield, along the Colne Valley, grimly beautiful in gathering twilight, over the hills to Oldham, and so to an immense meeting at the Bellevue Gardens in Manchester. At all those places MacDonald spoke, and at some to large open-air audiences. At all, except Durham, which lay paralysed under the glory of its cathedral and episcopal predilections, he was received with fine enthusiasm. After each speech he said to Lord Arnold and me, "It's no good. I am done. I can speak no more. My throat is worn out. You must just announce that I can't speak. Or you must speak for me." But at the sight of each vast audience awaiting him, he forgot all about his throat and his exhaustion. The great voice poured out as usual. The gestures were as free and natural, the eloquence as fine.

After the enormous meeting in Manchester, we drove on to the home of Lord Arnold's brother at Altringham, just over the Cheshire border. It was the night of October 15th, and while I was trying to fit up an electric oxygen machine lent by Dr. Hector Munro for the benefit of MacDonald's throat, a King's Messenger arrived with a despatch box containing a lot of documents, among which lay the letter that was to prove fatal. Before he went to bed that night, after so strenuous a day, MacDonald added the note to

Rakovsky, Russian *Charge d’Affaires* in London, which in its final form contained the words :—

“ It is my duty to inform you that His Majesty’s Government cannot allow this propaganda, and must regard it as a direct interference from outside in British domestic affairs.

“ No one who understands the constitution and relationship of the Communist International will doubt its intimate connection and contact with the Soviet Government. No Government will ever tolerate an arrangement with a foreign Government by which the latter is in formal diplomatic relations of a correct kind with it, whilst at the same time a propagandist body organically connected with that foreign Government encourages and even orders subjects of the former to plot and plan revolutions for its overthrow. Such conduct is not only a grave departure from the rules of international comity, but a violation of specific and solemn undertakings repeatedly given to His Majesty’s Government.”

The agreement to that effect signed by the Soviet Government on June 4, 1923, is then added.<sup>1</sup>

Early next morning the King’s Messenger left with the Zinovieff document, MacDonald’s Note to Rakovsky, and the regular instructions to the Foreign Office to publish if the letter were proved authentic. I noticed that on that morning (the 16th) I had time to go carefully round his garden with Lord Arnold’s brother, and we did not set off till ten o’clock. MacDonald seemed just as unperturbed as usual. The letter had not affected him. It was too ordinary an occurrence. As he said when the whole question was revived by Mr. Marlowe’s confession in the *Observer* :—

“ Until the Saturday morning ” (i.e. October 25, 1924) “ when I saw the attack that was being made upon me it never crossed my mind that the letter had any political significance at all. I have never formed a definite conclusion about the document. My suspicion has always been that it was not authentic. I have never been able to prove that it was not authentic. I have never been able to prove that it was authentic. But practically from the beginning

<sup>1</sup> Blue Book : Russia, No. 3 (1927), pp. 28-29.

I took the view that the important point was not the authenticity of the document but the use to which the document was put.”<sup>1</sup>

Driving past Alderley Edge, through Macclesfield, the Potteries, sleepy Stafford and Cannock, we came to Wolverhampton. All the way through the Black Country from there to West Bromwich MacDonald was greeted as though he were the man for whom the working people had long been waiting to deliver them from their wretchedness. The car could hardly move. We had to shut off the engine, and allow the crowds to push us along. The people swarmed on every inch of it, and clung to every bit of MacDonald they could touch. “Here we are,” they seemed to say, “living in these grimy holes ; toiling by day and night for the country’s prosperity, and only glad if we can get the toil ; looking at deserted slag-heaps and coal shafts as our only idea of Nature ; reduced by machines almost to the state of mechanical Robots ourselves. Is not this the man who would save us ? Is it not to save us that he has come ?”

The meeting in the Birmingham Market was perhaps the finest and most triumphant of the whole journey. And as MacDonald and I drove away to Harrison Barrow’s house in the suburbs, it may be that he was thinking for the first time that day of the Zinovieff letter and the Russians. My part on the journey was to keep silence, and certainly never to ask questions ; but then, moved perhaps by a kind of “telepathy,” I suddenly asked whether he had not found it difficult to deal with the Russian delegates, and he replied, “Not difficult, but almost impossible.” He went on to describe how the Russians were constantly shifting their ground, going back upon what seemed settled, and undermining his intentions. I was thinking mainly of Georgia, and he explained how hard and vainly he had endeavoured to save that tormented people, among whom persecution and slaughter had recently raged more terribly than usual since the Soviet breach of their treaty and the subsequent

<sup>1</sup> Statement to Press Association : *Manchester Guardian*, March 5, 1928.

invasion in February, 1921. But he also spoke of Russian intrigue in Persia, Afghanistan, China, and other countries, as is now known to everyone. It is possible that the memory of the previous night haunted him with increased suspicions, and revived doubts which he had lately overcome. For, indeed, the Soviet revolution was proclaimed by its first principles to be “ planetary.”

From Birmingham we drove on through sleepy Droitwich, Worcester on my dear river Severn, Malvern, where the parasitic population boo'd us, Ross, along the beautiful Valley of the Wye (I suppose my attraction to MacDonald is partly due to his keen sense of natural beauty), and so through Monmouth, to Cardiff and other Welsh towns, MacDonald speaking at every important place, either in a hall or market. And so we drew near his constituency at Aberavon. For the last three miles the crowd was so thick that again we had to shut off the engine, and hardly made a mile an hour among the excited cheers and shouting of the workpeople, some of whom had set words in MacDonald's honour to the “ Men of Harlech,” and sang them with Welsh perfection. The broadsheet of the *Daily Mail* next morning described the Prime Minister's reception there as “ cold and silent.” For my own sake I wished the imaginative editor had been right.

But victory must be applauded, and by its unexplained intrigue in regard to the Zinovieff letter the *Daily Mail* won its war against Labour. Fear of Bolshevism gave the Conservatives the big battalions on whose side God is supposed to stand, and Mr. Baldwin was called upon to resume his unsuccessful struggle against the meshes in which mine-owners and profiteers contrived to entangle his quiet and honourable soul. I have throughout felt a natural sympathy with such a man. For he loves the English countryside. Like MacDonald, he is instinctively aware of beauty. Like me, he loves dogs, and seems born for the homely squire's country life. He loves good literature too, and in old days I should have welcomed him as my colleague

or rival in composing weekly "middles" for the *Nation*, though perhaps the old *Spectator* under St. Loe Strachey, would have suited him better. I could not have imagined anyone more fitted to lead those Young Conservatives who have attempted to revive the "Young England" party of Disraeli's early life. And I have all the more regretted the extremes of reaction to which he has been driven, as in his treatment of the coal-miners, by a far more powerful body of his supporters.

For myself, after MacDonald's defeat, I felt inclined, like the member of the Opposition in Plato, to sit under the shadow of a great rock until the tyranny were overpassed. But for the livelihood of myself and others I had, of course, to continue in journalism—doing work for Brailsford's *New Leader*, the *Baltimore Sun*, and a few other papers, and bringing out "More Changes More Chances," which was published in 1925. In the spring of the same year I also, reluctantly, undertook a difficult piece of work—the exploration of the "Douglas-Pennant Case." Twice or three times I refused, but Mr. C. P. Scott, the venerable editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, came up himself to urge me, and no one could refuse "C. P." Like the Dreyfus case, with which it has been justly compared, it was a complicated and perplexing intrigue to follow, all the more because men and women of high position, great wealth, and good reputation were deeply involved. I felt as though I were trying to swim in a swamp of bottomless mud. It was like a detective story in which one repeatedly loses the clue ; and when at last I perceived the solution, I almost despaired of deciding whether the injustice had been perpetrated by malign jealousy or gullible ignorance. On the whole, I concluded that it was the one acting on the other. But after working through the mass of evidence, I was convinced that Miss Douglas-Pennant had suffered shameful injustice.

As in the Dreyfus case, the injustice did not concern one person alone. The honour of our whole legal system was involved, and it is not to the credit of Prime Ministers in all

three Parties in turn that they have persistently refused the only redress possible—an open and honourable re-examination. Of course, all men and women are equal before the Law, but one cannot help noticing that some of Miss Douglas-Pennant's accusers were endowed with titles, wealth, high position, and social influences that might be useful to a Party in power, or even in Opposition.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Douglas-Pennant's prolonged resistance to the injustice, suffered under a charge which she has never yet (1928) been allowed to know, has been heroic ; but I may mention here the heroism of another woman belonging to a different class. While I was at the Schools in Shrewsbury, a boy was with me in the Sixth named Owen Downward, recognised as clever and eccentric, and recognised as still cleverer and more eccentric when he was at Magdalen, Oxford, as a “ Demy.” While there he developed fits of mania so violent that once I interfered to prevent his braining the Dean with a soda-water bottle, and as I exercised a calming influence over his mind, I enjoyed the good fortune of saving many others during our years in Oxford, besides tracking him up and down the country whenever he escaped from his keeper or asylum. Coming to London, he revelled in the society of unfortunate and poverty-stricken writers then haunting the Reading Room of the Museum for warmth and shelter, and they in their turn revelled in the drinks freely supplied by his little fortune. After intervals of wild delirium, he found work in Edinburgh among people I knew, and there he managed to maintain himself fairly well for some years. For he was an admirable scholar, possessing a fine critical sense and an infallible memory for Greek, Latin, and English verse. Unhappily, he never felt at home with the Scottish temperament, and as the Scots despised him as the typical Southron runagate, he gradually lost employment, and returned to the joys of London, which he found

<sup>1</sup> See “ The Douglas-Pennant Case : A Review and A Restatement.” By Henry W. Nevinson (Reprinted from the *Manchester Guardian*, June 10 to June 13, 1925). No answer has been made by Miss Douglas-Pennant's accusers.

equally enjoyable though his money had gone and his friends had followed it. I then lost touch with him, until I heard from Mrs. Lovat, a widow who kept a little eating-house off Leicester Square, that he had mentioned my name when he sat down at one of her tables, in such a filthy condition that the cheapest lodging-houses refused to admit him. That hard-working woman cleansed him, fed him, helped to clothe him in the things I brought down, helped me to look for a fairly decent lodging, and when at last he was found lying in a fit near Trafalgar Square and drafted off by the police and doctors into Hanwell Asylum, she divided with me the rather painful effort of cheering him by Sunday visits, tobacco, sweets, and books. These visits she continued even after she had suffered a grievous operation, and knew herself to be dying of another terrible disease. She had no call to befriend the unhappy man, except his unhappiness. She had never seen him till he entered her little shop utterly destitute ; she could not appreciate his minute knowledge of horse-racing, boxing, and the classics. Nearly all his rapid and disjointed conversation must have been quite unintelligible to her. Yet she visited him, almost to the day of her death, and I record such kindness as heroic. She died March 1, 1925, and the man she had so nobly befriended died in Hanwell, August 5, 1926.

The year 1925 was enlightened by a repetition of my favourite walk along Hadrian's Wall from Hexham to Carlisle, and then further into my own ancestral Lake Country. But it was marked also by one failure and two lost chances. The failure was a visit to Paris in the vain attempt to induce M. Léon Blum and other leaders of the Socialist or Labour Party in the Chamber to advocate peace in Morocco with Abdul Krim, who was gallantly holding out for his people on the Riff. One lost chance was the collapse of an invitation to Peru, which I was asked to describe, ultimately for the benefit of some railway scheme. I had no interest in the proposed railway, but I longed to see a condor flying over the Andes, and so was disappointed when,

as business people say, the design “ failed to materialise.” That was not my fault, but for the other lost chance I shall always blame myself. In the early morning of March 27, while I was engaged writing as usual against time, someone called up on the telephone and asked me, in the name of a big American Syndicate, if I would fly over the North Pole with Amundsen. Perhaps my vitality was low that early morning ; perhaps my mind was preoccupied ; perhaps the invitation was too suddenly sprung upon a naturally slow and hesitating nature ; perhaps I remembered my increasing age. For some such foolish reason I refused. If Amundsen had written, instead of calling up in that peremptory manner, I should have accepted. For I always keep in mind the words of Ulysses to his ageing companions :—

*“ A questa tanto picciola vigilia  
De vestri sensi, ch’ è del rimanente,  
Non vogliate negar l’ esperienza,  
Diretto all sol, del mondo senza gente.”<sup>1</sup>*

I regret the refusal all the more because Amundsen and his crew did not perish like Ulysses and his friends, but lost only one of the two aeroplanes, spent only three weeks in digging the other out of the ice, and returned alive.

Of the “ general strike ” which ensued in May, 1926, after Mr. Baldwin’s futile endeavour to buy off the mine-owners by a subsidy that in the end amounted to about £19,000,000, I will here only say that, if the strike had really been general, it would necessarily have been equivalent to revolution. But the leaders of the Trade Union Council never intended revolution. They intended to bring pressure on the mine-owners by a display of widespread sympathy with the miners in their wretched existence. Their minds were not set to the revolutionary point, and even Mr. Churchill’s *British Gazette*, and his parade of tanks and troops convoying provisions from the Docks could not inflame them so far. After ten days they capitulated, believing that the Govern-

<sup>1</sup> “Inferno.” xxvi. 114.

ment would in reality support Sir Herbert Samuel's welcome "memorandum" of May 11, and that Mr. Baldwin would not allow his peaceful message, broadcast on May 12, to be overridden by his own Ministers. The miners were thus left to fight their lonely battle, in which the owners, supported by Mr. Baldwin's Government, drove them to utter defeat on the 1st of December. For myself, I need only record that during those ten days of the strike I walked on foot some 100 miles about the working districts of London, gathering information for the *Baltimore Sun*, and cheered only when the young Oxford blacklegs, as they started their Tube trains for Golders Green, would cry : "Any more for the nightingales ?" and when, as the window of one of their 'buses was shattered, they pasted over the hole, "Emergency exit only !" My faith in the unity of the English blood was thus restored. We take our pleasures sadly (think of a cricket match or golf !). But we take our troubles with a smile. We are artists at play, and jolly amateurs in disaster.

## CHAPTER XIII

### " THOSE HOLY FIELDS " <sup>1</sup>

*" By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Sion . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land ? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."*

Prayer Book translation of the Psalm cxxxvii. 1. 4. 5.

LATE in that summer of 1926, for the tenth or eleventh time within thirty years, I had the opportunity of escaping into the Near East, and the chance brought with it the same old sense of exhilaration and deliverance. Again I should see the water purple as thick amethyst, and distinctive mountains bare but for the aromatic herbs filling all the crannies of their rocks. Again I should see the walled cities that Athenians built, or Roman Emperors, or Venetians, or Turks ; and from their fortress-harbours the little boats with pointed sails would skim gaily out, hardly changed from the time when Ulysses held the rudder. The narrow streets would still be crowded with variegated peoples, speaking strange words. The markets would still be heaped with strange fruits and vegetables ; all the scene pervaded by that suspicion of garlic which Parisians extol. And over all would glow the Mediterranean sky, under which the best of mankind were bred.

To Constantinople itself the years had brought changes. The Galata bridge of boats had gone. The Red Sultan had gone, and so, by a far more regrettable fate, had the harm-

<sup>1</sup> " *To chase the pagans in those holy fields  
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet,  
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd  
For our advantage on the bitter cross."*

" King Henry IV," Part I, Act I, Sc. I.

less clans of dogs. The crimson fez had gone, supplanted by the British workman's second-hand cap, the peak worn over one ear so as still to allow obeisance with forehead to ground so long as Allah might survive. The veil had gone, and, with faces shameless as a Christian's, women revealed their painted lips, their dyed cheeks and eyelids, their short-cropped hair, their open necks, and the beauty of legs which men conceal in cylinders of cloth. Women sat smoking in cafés. They travelled barefaced in trains and steamers. They conversed with men. They danced with men. They were European. And all this freedom was won for them in half a dozen years just through the courage of my friend Mme Halidé—Halidé Edib of the Turkish army ! What a Suffragette !

But two emblems of eternity remained : one the Turkish official with open palm, the other the Turkish porter. There he tottered, bent double under his enormous burden, which he balanced upon a huge stuffed saddle for hod. He was unshaven and filthy ; tattered brown rags hardly covered his hairy brown skin ; on his head he wore a little brown cap ; on his feet squashy slippers tied by strings to whitey-brown stockings full of holes. So he still crawled through the streets, with eyes fixed on the ground, because the weight of his burden prevented his looking up. Turkish women had changed from swaddled chrysalises to flaunting butterflies ; the Turkish horse decorated with blue beads against the evil eye had vanished before the shrieking motor ; the Caliphate had departed ; revolution had swept revolution away. But to the Turkish porter such changes were nothing. Revolutions in laws, governments, habits, hats, and religion were to him but passing moments in his eternal destiny. He remained unmoved, the incarnation of the working class, the emblem of eternity.

As in a dream I passed across the broad Sea of Marmora to where the coasts of Europe and Asia draw together at the Narrows of the Dardanelles. Presently on the left I could see again the hill that was Troy, and on the right the reverse

slopes of the rugged cliffs that I had so often climbed when Anzac lay on the other side. As the lighthouse upon Cape Helles revolved its gleam, I watched a ghostly column beside it appear at intervals, and supposed it was a memorial set up to men who need a visible memorial no more than the heroes at Troy. At dawn for the third time I saw Sappho's Mitylene and the olive-bearing hills of Lesbos. At noon we put into Smyrna, where Mustapha Kemal began his task of Europeanising the Turks by causing his troops or envious neighbours to drive the Greek army and the Greek inhabitants (200,000 of them, it was said) headlong from the quays to perish in the water (September 8, 1922), and consumed to ashes the Greek half of the city, so that hardly a house was standing, and none inhabited. Climbing the hill above the desolation, I discovered again the now neglected tomb of martyred Polycarp, pupil of the beloved disciple. And next day we anchored off Rhodes, Italian now, but still splendid with the buildings of rough orange stone, set there by the Knights of St. John, and hardly altered by six centuries of change. Next evening we made Cyprus, the real “ Abode of Love,” now protected by the British flag, in evidence of that Treaty once called “ Peace with Honour,” by which our country pledged herself to preserve the Armenians in Turkey. And next morning we entered Beyrout harbour, along the low cliff of which stood a vast and squalid camp erected out of scraps of board, petroleum tins, and rags by a swarm of our protected, penniless Armenians, escaped with bare life from the Turks who massacred Adana and other parts of Cilicia four or five years before. Here our trustful Armenians lived and died in human misery reduced to its lowest terms, and dying was easy.

As in a dream I went up the Dog River (Nahr el Kelb) running into the centre of Lebanon, and marked at the entrance by rock-cut records of various conquerors who have passed that way—Assyrian and Egyptian kings, Marcus Aurelius of Rome, Napoleon III and Gouraud of

France, and Allenby of England. And so, across the broad valley between the two ranges of Lebanon, where Mount Hermon seems to block the outlet of the young river Jordan, to the vast ruins of Baalbek, temple in turn of some prehistoric god, of Baal, god of the sun, of Helios the sun, of Jove the sun and sky, quickly superseded by the worship of Christ. History—mankind's history, all in a dream ! And a pleasant dream. For with me went Roland and Marjorie Vernon, on their way out to the task of defending King Feisul of Iraq from the corruption of the East. And with us, too, went Harold Buxton, most lovable and tolerant of Anglican priests, so strangely learned that, in his preoccupation with the hardly perceptible but rancorous differences between the forms of Early Christian faith, the passing scenes that we call reality sometimes appeared to escape his notice. With him, from a mountain height, I traced the road I was later on to traverse to Damascus, half ruined by General Sarrail in carrying out the French protective mandate. Then we drove one morning past Sidon and Tyre, Phoenician cities, still gleaming on their promontories, once the scenes of mystic worship, and the homes of the first great navigators ; and so we climbed to a point upon a projecting headland, where a steady sergeant of the old "2nd London," stood on watch over the gate of the Holy Land.

To an Englishman brought up last century, as I was, in a strictly Evangelical family, that land is not merely holy. It is far more intimately known than his own country. It is almost his own possession, and bewildering enthusiasts used even to hint to him that, as a descendant from "the Lost Ten Tribes," he even had some claim to that heritage. The fragments of Jewish poetry, legend, and history, collected as one consecutive and unalterable book called the Old Testament, which was inspired directly by the spirit of God and therefore eternally true, were so accurately impressed upon his mind by reverence and daily repetition that the name of every place and river in Palestine at once

suggested some scene associated with it in the Scriptural narrative. In youth I came to know Greek literature and Greek history fairly well, but the knowledge of the Old Testament, driven into my soul as a child, remained more lasting, though my sympathy and admiration were by nature given to Athens.

This strictly Biblical education produced among those who, like myself, belong to the last century, the peculiar illusion that both the promises and the threatenings of the Jewish lawgivers and prophets were specially designed for ourselves by a foreseeing Power. We never doubted that we English Evangelicals were the Chosen People, and when, every Sunday evening, we sang in the *Magnificat*, “As He promised to our forefathers Abraham and his seed for ever,” we gave no thought to the Jews ; and when soon afterwards we sang in the *Nunc Dimittis* “To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel,” we meant that Missionary Societies would spread the light of the Gospel to negroes, Chinese, and Indians, while God’s English people retained the glory. Though we heard passages from Jewish history every Sunday, and read or even sang several Jewish lyrics, I can remember only one mention of the Jews in our Prayer Book services, and that occurs in one of the Good Friday Collects. For, after admitting that God made all men and hates nothing that He has made, nor desires the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live, that Collect calls on Him to have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics, in the hope that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites. And by the true Israelites we unquestionably understood the Protestants of congregations like ours.

How far those views of Jewish literature were shared by the Catholics of our own and foreign countries (all doomed to eternal torment as we devoutly believed), I still cannot be sure. But our prayers and canticles were for the most part directly translated from the Catholic Latin use, and perhaps there is some evidence of a Catholic belief similar to ours in

such relics of medieval Catholicism as the sculptures surrounding the west doors of Amiens Cathedral, in which symbols and allegories derived from the Jewish poets are inserted as applicable to the contemporary Christians of France.

My whole mind and nature being thus indelibly inscribed with Biblical knowledge and tradition, I entered with excited interest upon the scenes so long familiar to me by name. There above Haifa (soon by Jewish and British effort to become the port of Palestine) rose Mount Carmel, where Elijah overcame the priests of Baal, and had them all slain in the river Kishon that flows past its base. There was Nazareth, for many years the home of One Whom millions still account Divine because He was so unlike the rest of us. There was Tiberias, where Herod had his summer palace overlooking the Sea of Galilee, on the shore of which I could see the few trees marking Magdala, where the sinful woman who became the Magdalene could find no customers now. And that was Bethsaida, where a mill grinds for two or three houses ; and that Capernaum, where nothing of the large town remains but ruins of the synagogue built with a queer mixture of Jewish and Greek decoration by the centurion who loved the Jewish nation, as St. Luke narrates in his seventh chapter. Then we crossed the broad valley of Jezreel, running from Carmel almost to the Jordan—Jezreel called Esdraelon, or “the Emek,” or Armageddon, a name lately extended by poetic journalists to the whole of Europe and the Near East. And there was Endor, where the witch called up the reluctant ghost of Samuel to give warning to King Saul. And there were the mountains of Gilboa, where Saul and Jonathan were not divided in death. And there the citadel of Beth-shan, or Beisan, where the Philistines nailed the mutilated body of Saul to the walls.

From the foot of Mount Gilboa issues the spring where Gideon selected three hundred men as likely to be the best warriors because they lapped the water as dogs lap, and not as horses drink. And further down, that stream is called the

Goliath to this day, so that it seems likely David picked up his fatal pebble there. And beyond the valley of Jezreel I climbed up the hills of Samaria to the beautiful Arab city of Nablous, once Shechem, on the twin mountains above which a fading group of Samaritans still do yearly sacrifice. And passing southward over a high upland, I came to the summits of the long ridge where Titus pitched his camp, and our *Cœur de Lion* gained his one brief glimpse of the Holy City, goal of adventurous hope.

Upon the opposite height, distinct with domes and towers, it stood—Jerusalem, the Holy City, the natural centre of the round world, as may be seen upon the ancient map of the world in Hereford Cathedral; the spiritual centre of all the Jewish race and all the various forms of Christian faith. Through the circle of the walls at the Damascus gate, I entered the narrow and cavernous streets, nearly all arched for support, and many so vaulted as to be perpetually dark, impenetrable to anything but camel, mule, or man. But as I wandered up and down the steps and among the dim caves of that most beautiful of medieval cities, I suddenly came upon a high wall, founded on large and ancient blocks of stone, where Jewish women along one half its length, and Jewish men along the other, were weeping and wailing in sorrow and supplication. There I saw one woman tuck into a cranny of the wall a slip of paper upon which she had written something, and drive it deep into the cranny with her finger. Then she kissed the large stones inch by inch, muttering prayers. Was she praying for a national triumph, the accomplishment of prophecies, the revival of Israel in a land over which the British flag now waved? I thought it doubtful, but the sight revived in me the purpose for which I had been sent, and having crossed the dry bed of Kedron, and upon the Mount of Olives sorrowfully repented of all the things I had not done, I returned to seek my object among the Zionist Jews.

If I, sprung from an entirely different race, and having no connection with Palestine beyond the familiar associa-



### JERUSALEM

From my window. Domes of Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre in the distance



tions of religion and literature, felt an excited interest in every scene, I could easily imagine what the approach to his ancestral land must mean to a Jew. Here was the focus of his history, his law, and his religion—the little slip of land consecrated by memories and by hopes. This was the heritage from which for so many centuries his people had been exiled, to suffer contumely, robbery, torture, and violent death. Throughout all those centuries of misery and despiteful treatment, his people had maintained their distinctive nature and unvarying ritual, always keeping their hearts fixed on the records of a divinely guided past, and on the Zion where in some future age—in some age surely not hopelessly distant—their strong Deliverer would arise. What I felt at my first sight of Athens, or what I always feel still more keenly at the sight of England when after a long absence I approach her shore, must be felt with a yearning of even deeper affection when the Jew touches the soil of Palestine, his promised land.

I knew little of the Zionists. When Mr. Arthur Balfour, on November 2nd, 1917, announced that the British Government would regard with favour the establishment of a "National Home" for Jews in Palestine, I took little notice. I listened with indifference to the common sneer that it would be a mercy for the world if all Jews went back to their own country, but in their places of exile they appeared far too comfortable to move. Israel Zangwill used to tell me that in his efforts for his people he had tried Palestine, and found it too thickly occupied by Arabs. He had consulted me about various parts of Africa as suitable substitutes for the ancestral country, but most of the districts known to me were either full or dry, and I could not recommend Angola as a healthy land, though I knew that under a Jewish settlement the natives would be delivered from the slavery imposed upon them by the Portuguese.

So I thought no more about the question till I met Dr. Pinhas Rutenberg in the summer of 1922, and heard from him the details of his scheme for extending light, heat, and

power throughout Palestine by converting into electricity the force of the Jordan and its main tributary the Jarmuk, as they fall from the level of the Lebanon and Mount Hermon to the level of the Lake of Tiberias, which is 600 feet below sea-level, and then to the level of the Dead Sea, which is 600 feet lower still, being, it is said, the lowest point on the earth's surface. I had known Dr. Rutenberg by name from the days when I was in Russia during the abortive revolution of 1905–1906, and he was playing a leading part as a Social Democrat. Now I found in him a man of extraordinary energy and power, and a skilful engineer, so far as I could judge. He had lately received from Sir Herbert Samuel, the successful High Commissioner for our Mandate-in Palestine, a concession for carrying out his scheme, the city of Jerusalem being alone excluded in favour of some other British Company. He invited me to come with him to Palestine, but though the invitation was often repeated I had no chance till the Zionist Organisation in London again asked me to go that summer of 1926, and the *Manchester Guardian* promised to accept my accounts of Zionism and the country in general, together with Syria and Transjordania.

So with the help of Colonel Kisch, who had served as a Sapper in the Regular Army before and during the war, and was now the leading spirit of the Zionist Organisation (*Keren Hayesod*) in Jerusalem; and under the guidance of Dr. Hans Kohn, correspondent for English and German papers and the very best of guides, being welcome in every Zionist “ colony,” I was able to pass up and down through nearly the whole of Palestine. I visited a large number of the 121 Jewish settlements, of which some were nearly fifty years old, and only about 40 belonged to the recent Zionist Organisation. Their land had been purchased in perpetuity for Zionists through the agency of the Jewish National Fund (*Keren Kayemeth*). The older and at present larger settlements were run on the ordinary lines of rent and labour, even Arab labour being sometimes employed. Some of them, such as Petah Tikvah (Dawn of Hope), a

few miles north of Jaffa, flourished abundantly on Jaffa oranges for export. Rishon-el-Zion, on the other hand, a few miles south of Jaffa, and the centre of wide vineyards, was suffering from the strict temperance of the United States, formerly one of the chief customers for its wine. To meet the situation Rishon was manufacturing a non-alcoholic drink of pure grape-juice and sugar, but the American officials protested that too much alcohol developed upon the voyage—nearly 2 per cent; far too much for the rigid abstention of American citizens. These scruples had driven the people of Rishon to plough up many of their vineyards and substitute groves of oranges and almonds.

In the Zionist “colonies” the rule of “self-labour” prevailed, and no Arab or other labour might be hired. But some of the colonies were run on “individualist” lines (*Moshav Ovdim*), others on “communal” (*Kvutzah*) lines, and of these there were then seventeen. “Who ever saw a Jew with a spade in his hand?” our old Cobbett asked, and it would have astonished him to see in the Zionist colonies pretty nearly 30,000 Jews tilling the soil. To me it seemed the biggest miracle in a land distinguished for miracles. As I was writing on Zionists I naturally took most interest in the villages of “self-labour,” and of these the communal villages attracted me most, owing to their peculiarity. I visited more than half of them, including Metula, an outpost at the very peak of the British mandate, having the French mandate of Syria on both sides. The little village is raised high above the malarial marshes of Lake Merom, and looks eastward to Mount Hermon, where on a favourable day one could then watch the Druses fighting in small bands against the African battalions of France.

But on the whole I saw most of the two communal villages called Ain Charod and Beth Alpha, planted at the foot of Mount Gilboa, across the Valley of Esdraelon (Jezreel), nearly opposite to Balfouria (Lord Balfour is the English hero of Zionists), which is an “individualist” village, each family working for such profit as it might make. Ain Charod is

watered by that Gideon's spring welling out from the foot of Gilboa, but though the courageous pioneers (*Halutzim*) had drained the ground and planted eucalyptus trees (“Jewish trees,” as the Arabs call them), malaria still prevailed, and the village was soon to be removed to a hillside on the opposite edge of the broad valley.

I saw more of Beth Alpha, where I stayed. Here there were 130 inhabitants, not counting the numerous children. Nearly all had come from Czecho-Slovakia, but all spoke German as their natural language, though, as in Tel-Aviv and all the colonies, they talked Hebrew among themselves, and the children spoke nothing else. It was a true community, using no money. All shared in the work, and no one was paid. The necessary food and clothing were kept in a common store, and given out as required by each family. Anything gained by the sale of surplus produce beyond the common needs went into the common store as well. Each married pair had a separate wooden hut, but three times a day all gathered for meals into one long shed. By a law of fate or custom, only women were appointed to do the cooking and washing up, but they took it in turns. In the evening the wind, sweeping down the wide valley from the Mediterranean, raised clouds of dust, and the heat at midday was considerable, though not overpowering. Dress was admirably simple—a slightly elongated chemise of thickish white stuff for the women, covering what little they might put underneath ; and for the men a dark shirt and shorts. All went bareheaded, and nearly all barefoot, though a few wore sandals. I asked why some of the women on Sabbath evenings wore embroidered tunics, and even bits of silk and lace ; and they said they either made the stuffs themselves for fun, or received them as presents from their old homes, or had brought them out when they came. In any case they were not an army to be put into uniform. Not they, indeed !

There was no synagogue in Beth Alpha or in any other communal village that I visited. The Sabbath and other sacred feasts were observed, and the Jewish scriptures were

read as a national possession, but the ritual of the Pentateuch and its never-ending commentaries were superseded by an enthusiasm for the National Home and the experiment of community. Naturally I asked what happened to the lazy and incapable, and was told that the pressure of public opinion was too strong to allow of idleness. In flagrant cases, the chairman of the chosen committee might remonstrate, but remonstrance was seldom needed, and only three members had gone back to their European homes. Being Jews, all demanded intellectual interests. They liked to hear news of Europe, and listened to what I could tell them of the British Labour movement and the coal strike. At intervals a string quartet went round from one village to another, giving them the best German and Bohemian music.

Marriages could be made under the Rabbinical law by what we should call a Registrar, but as a rule no rite was required. Lovers lived together as married people, unless they ceased to love, and then they lived apart without reproach. There was said to be no laxity in these matters, and certainly marriage was simplified and made less toilsome by a communal home for all children. Near the middle of the village was a well-built house surrounded by a garden, and there the children lived and slept as soon as they were weaned, under the care of women specially adapted for the unending labour of child-management. Mothers were thus set free to sleep by night and work by day, except for a few weeks before and after childbirth. Even the smallest children appeared to know their own mothers when they looked in at noon or in the evening, and appeared glad to see them. The mothers also knew their own children, and seemed equally glad. They looked rather indignant when I asked how it was done. "Of course we know them! Of course they know us!" they exclaimed. I suppose that happened by some "law of nature," but the communal villages, so closely resembling Plato's ideal in many respects, differed from it in this. He would have had no child know its

mother, and no mother know her child, and Plato has a reputation for wisdom. He probably discerned how plaguey relations can be.

Of course the newly planted Zionist colonies were rather “wild and woolly,” but in strong contrast to them stood the Zionist town of Tel-Aviv, which has extended as a kind of suburb northwards from the ancient Arab port of Jaffa—I suppose about the worst landing-place in the world. Seventeen years before, the site was a waste of sand dunes, such as abound along the shores of Philistia and Sharon, thrown up by the western gales and the strong undercurrent that gives the coast of Palestine its peculiarly straight outline. Then a few Jews began building on the dunes, finding that the compressed sand a few feet down gave a solid foundation. By 1926 the population had grown to 43,000 in a brilliantly white and clean city, with wide, straight, and level streets, fit for the motor traffic that dashed to and fro. It was entirely a Jewish city, and Hebrew was the only language spoken, though all public notices were written in the three official languages, English, Hebrew, and Arabic. A few of the citizens, having served in the war, could speak English. Many more spoke Polish, Russian, or German. But in Hebrew all the Jewish races found a common language, to some extent familiar to them from childhood. Here on the Sabbath the vast synagogue, nearly completed, was crowded with worshippers, the married men wearing their white shawls striped with black—the same that will be used as their shrouds. But along the shore the children were sporting on the sand, and crowds of young men and women were rushing out into the waves, swimming against the dangerous current, or paddling far across the surf in canoes, indifferent to upsetting. And certainly they had nothing on to spoil.

It is true, the town, like the whole Zionist movement, was then passing through a “crisis.” In spite of the careful limitations laid down by agreement between the British administration and the *Keren Hayesod*, too many immi-

grants had come in during the previous year. Worse than all, too many professional people had come—doctors, dentists, writers, musicians, and others incapable of working the land, which is the first care of Zionism. The unemployed ran to something over 4,000. The Labour Party, strong in the town, tried to distribute the work by regulating hours, but the factories, worked by a Rutenberg power-station with crude oil till the electric force from the Jordan could be applied, were small, and their trade in furniture, sweets, and textiles had hardly begun to pay. The co-operative society of builders and road-makers (*Solel Boneh*) had done excellent work both there and in Jerusalem, but for the time the town was overbuilt, and the Zionist Organisation was obliged to relieve distress with heavy "doles" until the temporary crisis should pass, as it did pass within the next few months. None the less, Tel-Aviv was a city of hope and youth. It was fine to go through the streets and watch the young men and young women hurrying upon their business or pleasure, indifferent to starchy tradition, free from social pressure, lightly dressed, and enbrowned to a rich colour in arms and necks and legs. No matter from what country the immigrant Zionists had come, here at all events they were released from the paralysing sense of fear.

That much I could also say of Palestine as a whole. Under British administration murder and highway robbery had almost ceased ; debts were being paid ; the corruption of justice had been reduced ; and the water supply and drainage improved, especially in Jerusalem itself chiefly owing to the care of the Civil Governor, Sir Ronald Storrs, who also preserved the city from modern desecration. As to the Arab population, there were at that time about 150,000 Jews in Palestine as against about 700,000 Arabs, and among the Jews were included the old settlers who had come to die in Zion, or to spend all their days swaying to and fro in the ancient schools, muttering the text of the Talmud commentaries, leaping and singing before the double scrolls of the Law as they were transferred from one

synagogue to another, or wandering the sacred streets tightly buttoned up in long thin coats, their pale thin faces scarcely visible under wide black hats and between long curls hanging down each cheek like artificial whiskers ; hungry too, poor fellows ! since the Soviet Government forbade the Russian Jews to send them money. But as to the Arabs, Zionism had caused in Palestine the clash of two civilisations, of two ages, of two ways of life utterly opposed. The Zionist was to the Arab what the motor was to the camel. As an old-fashioned Englishman, my tastes and sympathies are naturally on the side of the camel. What an interesting creature he is ! How dreamlike, almost prehistoric, symbolic of our childhood's religious associations ! And how exquisitely adapted to his desert surroundings ! With what aristocratic detachment he stalks through this puddle of a world, disdainful as a noble lord whose land has been nationalised by a Labour Government, with insufficient compensation ! He is a frieze, a memorial. On each side of the roads in Palestine one must leave a soft dusty strip for him to pad along. But down the centre of the road here comes the motor, all Europe and America driving it forward !<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A few figures in regard to Zionism at that date (1926) may still be of interest. The annual income of the Zionist Organisation (*Keren Hayesod*) was then estimated at about £600,000, and the annual income of the Jewish National Fund at about £300,000. The joint income was thus something under £1,000,000 a year. That sounds a good deal, but far more had been expected. Most of the subscriptions came from Jews in America ; South Africa was second in order ; English Jews “also ran.” Since the two Kerens began their activities the Jewish increase in Palestine had been about 80,000, and in 1925 about 34,000 had entered—too large a number, as I noticed above. Each settler had an equal amount of land allotted to him, namely 25 acres, on a lease for 49 years ; free of rent for 5 years, and then paying 2 per cent on agricultural land, and 4 per cent on urban land. But the whole arrangement might be revised after a certain number of years—a smaller number in the case of urban land, in the hope of avoiding the curse of “unearned increment.” The cost to the *Hayesod* of settling one family on one plot of land was about £700, not including the journey money (paid by the immigrant) and the cost of purchase (paid by the *Kayemeth*), making about £1,000 in all. That seemed to me a big sum for one family, but the experts told me the cost in Australia or California would not be less. It was estimated that Palestine could.

The position was defined by Sir Herbert Samuel in his admirable Report upon his administration of Palestine as High Commissioner (1920–1925) :

“ The Balfour Declaration did not mean that the purpose in view was to create a wholly Jewish Palestine. It did not contemplate the disappearance, or the subordination, of the Arab population, language, or culture. The terms of the Declaration did not propose that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a home should be founded in *Palestine*. ”

“ In order that this (Jewish) community should have the best prospect of free development and provide a full opportunity for the Jewish people to display its capacities, it is essential that it should know that it is in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance.”

An express clause in our Mandate lays it down that Transjordania is not to be included in the Jewish National Home, and many of the leading Zionists considered even peaceful penetration there to be unwise. I was inclined to

support a population of at least 4,000,000 instead of its present 800,000 or 900,000, and the Zionists were then occupying about one-tenth of the cultivable land. That tenth they had for the most part created by draining the worst marshes, as at Haifa where I saw 600 young Jews working in the poisonous swamps round the mouth of the Kishon for the Haifa Bay Development that is to make Haifa the port of Palestine. The marshes of Merom were still to be drained, but much had been done in the Emek (Valley of Jezreel), and throughout the country the curse of malaria had been greatly reduced. The Zionists have founded a great university and library on Mount Scopus overlooking Jerusalem, and great technical and scientific schools at Haifa. They have established training schools for girls in horticulture (the rose of Sharon still blooms) and every kind of field work. By the “ Hadassah ” Society, named after Esther and supported by Jewesses in America, the knowledge of health, especially the health of children, was being diffused among Jews, Arabs, and Christians without distinction of race or religion. The future of Zionism seemed to me to depend upon the patriotic enthusiasm which inspires young men and women from Europe to devote their lives amid hardship and risk to draining and tilling new ground, living in tents, building wooden huts, and sharing a communal life, without thought of personal gain ; and all because this was the land sanctified to them by history and by an exile so long lamented. (In 1928 the financial position of Zionism reported as greatly improved : see detailed article by Dr. Hans Kohn in *The New Judea*, April 27, 1928.)

agree, partly because the Arabs had vowed to cut the throat of any Jew who crossed Jordan, and such action could not conduce to peaceful penetration. But it also seemed to me advantageous to keep Transjordania as a buffer state between the tiny slip of Palestine and the enormous spaces of Arabia, towards which I looked out from the heights above Amman, Transjordania's chief town, and the furthest outpost of our power in that direction. In that little outpost was stationed Colonel Cox, responsible as British Representative to the High Commissioner of Palestine, Lord Plumer. With him he had a new frontier force of some 500 Arabs under Colonel Bewster, and about 1000 Arab gendarmerie under Colonel F. G. Peake (“Peake Pasha”), a flight of small aeroplanes above the town (distinct from the big aerodrome of the Bagdad mail, lying some 18 miles further south); a few armoured cars, and a few “advisers” to Amir Abdullah, brother to King Feisul of Iraq. Apart from the few airmen and about 200 British soldiers employed on the aerodrome, I think there were not more than a score of British people in the whole district, including wives and children.

But over there, in those vast Arabian spaces, moved Ibn Sa'ud, said to be the greatest Arab since Mohammed, commanding no one knew how many thousand Wahabis and other Arabs. What if he rushed upon Transjordania, a rather bigger territory than Palestine, but counting only about 250,000 inhabitants in all? The obstacle of Transjordania would at least give us time to bring up aeroplanes and troops from Egypt. Otherwise there was nothing to prevent thousands of inspired Wahabis from falling upon undefended Palestine and sweeping Christian sects, and all the various Jewish students, Rabbis, and Zionist settlers into the Mediterranean. Happily we were then on good terms with Ibn Sa'ud, and were just negotiating a further treaty with him (concluded in February, 1927). But as I stood on the hills of Amman, and visited the Amir in his brand-new palace, guarded at the doors by a Hugh Nubian slave with

his shining scimitar drawn as though to sweep off my head, I realised that here was indeed an "outpost of Empire." The Romans had early realised how vital the position was for the safety of Europe. Here in the hilly, half-desert region east of Jôrdan they planted their Dekapolis—ten fortified towns for the protection of the Imperial frontiers, and of these ten, Amman, which they ironically called Philadelphia, was the chief. Here on its northern hill, overlooking the town, I saw the massive orange walls of their great citadel. And cut in the southern hillside rose a vast theatre, its circular rows of seats arranged in wedges with steps between, its tunnels for entrance and exit still complete, its semicircular orchestra for the choric song and dance, its long stage with deep caverns underneath, either for actors or wild beasts to rest in till their turns came. At Jerâsh, some thirty miles north of Amman, are remains of a smaller but more perfect theatre, and of a similar fortress. In the other eight outposts no doubt one could find the same. As when the Romans quartered the legions there, Transjordania still stands on guard upon the frontiers of European civilisation.

## CHAPTER XIV

### CODA

*"And when my life was ended,  
How sorry was I!"*

Child's Song.

ONE morning in Jerusalem I woke to find myself, not famous, but seventy. It seemed incredible, almost ridiculous; for I had always felt that my life was only just beginning, and I felt so still. But there was no denying it. Numbers cannot be contradicted, and accounts balance if honestly kept. With a Father of the Church, I could only say, "I believe because it is impossible. It is ridiculous, therefore true." At the height of such powers of mind and body as I ever possessed, I had reached the limit of life ordained by common consent. My last changes were at hand; my last chances had almost gone.

It was still night, and the stars shone brilliantly above the silent streets, the domes, and towers of the city. Inevitably at such a time, and in such a place, I thought of all that had passed upon earth, and within that city's walls, under those unchanging stars. I knew that no sun in that infinity of suns, countless as the daisies in the English fields, had ever been concerned with the affairs of men. It would be monstrous to suppose that this microscopic dust-speck of a planet counted for anything in a universe to which no limit can be imagined, and beyond which, as astronomers told me, stretches yet another universe equally incalculable in unlimited space. I knew the truth of what my earliest friend has written :

*"No angel-trumpet sounds across that space,  
That cold vast space through which we headlong run,  
Day in, day out, along the destined ways  
Of the great circle round the godlike sun."*

*"Scorning our joys and heedless of our tears,  
The same for ever, counting not the hours,  
Unmoved, untouched by human hopes or fears,  
Passes the pageant of the Heavenly Powers."*

I knew it was true, and yet, as in crazy defiance, I have sometimes shaken my puny fist at the stars themselves, as though to say : " Incalculable, innumerable, inconceivable as you are, yet within this atom of a body I possess powers of which you know nothing—of which you are incapable." Even that same poet, Lucretian though he is, has allowed himself to burst through the flaming bulwarks of the world, and to write :

*"Only man's mind, like flashing sabre keen,  
Has smitten through the void space, piercing far ;  
Only man's mind has measured the unseen,  
And timed the timeless movements of the star."*<sup>1</sup>

We know nothing of the stars, or of a mind that may possibly vitalise them, but as yet we can imagine no intelligence greater than mankind's, or even different from it. So as I watched Jerusalem moving beneath them slowly to the east, my mind turned back again to the thought of my incredible age, and I recalled a verse I had made at thirty-five, when only half that age had been reached :

*"Now at the centre of life's arch I stand,  
And view its curve descending from to-day ;  
How brief the road from birth's mysterious strand !  
How brief its passage till it close in grey !  
Yet by this bridge went all the immortal band,  
And the world's saviour did not reach half-way."*

From my chamber in the Austrian Hospice I was looking over the self-same scene where that "world's saviour"

<sup>1</sup> See "Poems," by Philip G. L. Webb, C.B., C.B.E. (Nisbet). And for some account of our early friendship, see "Changes and Chances," pp. 48 to 52.

Somewhat similar was the thought of the spirit Marco when correcting Dante on the influence of the stars (*Purgatorio*, xvi., 79.)

*"A maggior forza ed a miglior natura  
Liberi soggiacete, e quella cria  
La mente in voi, che il ciel non ha in sua cura."*

who did not reach half-way had lived and died. No matter what supernatural attributes the yearning desire of mankind for something beyond experience and explanation may have added to his nature, here was the place, here the self-same scene. Somewhere close by had stood the upper chamber in which, with a sure foreboding of the doom that gathered round him, he said to the companions of his wandering life that the bread and the wine upon the table were symbols of his flesh and blood so soon to be consumed, and asked them to remember him whenever they partook of that food and drink. Behind me, just across a steep valley, was the garden where he prayed to be delivered from anguish such as all sensitive people feel at the approach of pain and death. Round the corner on my left, excavators not many years ago had unearthed a Roman building that may have been Pilate's judgment hall. Down the slope from the hall a path still led across the road from the Damascus Gate in front of me, and became the Via Dolorosa, the entrance of which I could plainly see. That rough lane, darkened by arches, and rising at intervals by steps, led to the low and flattish dome where tradition placed the cross, and, within a few yards of the cross, the sepulchre. Too close together, they seemed to me ; for why should a rich man plant his garden within touch of the public gallows ? But, except for curiosity, the mere locality did not matter. All that mattered was that somewhere within the scene lying before me under the stars that "world's saviour" had lived and died—died at half my age, or less than half.

I had seldom known a Christian man or Christian woman, and never a Christian State, that had attempted to live in accordance with his life or teaching. Perhaps the example is too high for endeavour. Certainly, as a great Anglican bishop said, no State that tried to follow Christ's precepts could continue to exist. "Blessed are the poor," "Take no thought for the morrow," "Consider the lilies," "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," "Judge not," "Resist not evil," "Forgive unto seventy times seven,"



*Raphael*

OLD H. W. N. (1928)



"Let him who is without sin cast the first stone"—were ever such impracticable paradoxes! How utterly at variance with what every Christian man, woman, and Government does habitually every day and night! If commonsense, founded on experience, is sanity, what are we to make of teaching so directly opposed to commonsense? Think of our savings-banks, our investments, our prudent arrangements for old age, our delight in scandal, our suits for debt, our fashion-plates, our newspapers, our law-courts, and our wars! Or was it just because he appealed to something so wildly different from commonsense that millions of mankind for so many generations have marvelled at Christ as a power sprung from an unknown God?

I turned from the thought of the overwhelming tragedy once actually realised so close to the place where I was standing, and tried to recall the tenour of the seventy years—those twice thirty-five years—that made up my own bridge of life. It seemed that on the whole I had been unusually fortunate and happy in myself. With my friend Goethe, I could say "For myself I am happy enough. Joy comes streaming in upon me from every side, only for others I am not happy." I could readily agree with Bernard Shaw's soothing precept not to be oppressed by the sum of human suffering, nor greatly troubled by sympathy; for "poverty and pain are not cumulative."<sup>1</sup> But I am incapable of conceiving the sum of human suffering, and the suffering of individuals known to me cannot be so lightly glazed over.

*Felix opportunitate mortis*, is a common epitaph, though so few choose the right moment to die. But I have been happy in the opportunity of life. I was happy in being born to a grave and rigid manner of thought and behaviour; a condition poor enough to escape softness and luxury, but so far above the poverty line under which most people live that, with the help of scholarships, I could be sent to a great school and a great university. I have known no mathematics, and nothing of natural science beyond what

<sup>1</sup> "The Intelligent Woman's Guide," p. 455.

the observation of birds, animals, mountains, and seas could teach me. But I have contrived to learn something of the language and history of Athens, Rome, Germany, France, Italy, and England, and that amount of education has “cultivated my mind” and enabled me, though with perpetual anxiety and effort, to maintain myself and a few others at the level of decency to which we were accustomed.

It has afforded me also the happy opportunity of enjoying many physical pleasures, such as walking, cycling, riding, skating, swimming, and the management of boats on sea and river; also of enjoying the best old-fashioned music, passages of which, especially from Bach, Beethoven, and Schubert, are always sounding silently in my mind. I was happy in the opportunity of working under more than one editor whom I could heartily serve, of travelling further than most people over the world, and of being present at many great and terrible crises of war, rebellion, and revolution, upon which the course of history has turned. If the old philosopher was right in defining happiness as the active exercise of a man’s vital powers along the lines of excellence, and in a life affording full scope for their development,<sup>1</sup> I have no right to complain of scanty opportunities. Above all else, I have been happy in my intimate friends, both men and women. I had here intended to introduce a list of those to whom I owe most for comradeship in some common aim or labour; for that is the only friendship worth much. But a list, however carefully selected, would extend the book too far, and I must think of them only as a kind of rosary, still growing, and containing many beads still devoutly counted, though they represent the dead.

Some chances I have missed, chiefly through self-distrust; and, as I said, it was of the things I had not done that I repented on the Mount of Olives. It is for those “sins of omission” that I always bitterly repent.

But on that morning in Jerusalem (October 11, 1926), I woke to find few chances left, and if I had woken to find

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle’s “Ethics.” I. 6.

myself famous, it could hardly have been more disconcerting. Anxious to escape from the curse of introspection, I celebrated the embarrassing festival by going up and down the narrow streets of the city diffusing unusual joy by presenting five whole piastres (one shilling) to the friendly beggars and cripples whose chances in life had been small compared with mine—the man who, having no legs, wriggled over the ground on his belly like a snake ; the boy whose hands were bent backwards so that he could not feed himself ; the deaf-mute who gibbered at me ; the blind man whom a child led about on a chain ; the man who contrived to say “Good morning, sir ! ” but had no other qualification for charity ; the hoary prophet who kept an ageing sheep in a dark corner of a street, God knows why ; and the woman who squatted beside the Holy Sepulchre with one baby visible and another soon to be. None of them had been happy in the opportunity of life as I had been. And when I returned I found that the two Austrian maids of the Hospice had decorated my cell with red flowers, called “*Fleissige Lieschen*” (Busy Betties) because they bloom both summer and winter. For the maids knew it was my birthday, having accepted my imaginative statement that I was born on the field of Waterloo, a place of which they had never heard.

Knowing, then, that I was nearing the limit of existence—slowing down into the terminus, as Cardinal Newman expressed it—I set off as quickly as possible for Bagdad by way of Beyrouth, Tripolis, Homs, Palmyra (Queen Zenobia’s ruined city),<sup>1</sup> Rutbah, and Felujah on the Euphrates. Happily for me, the heavy rains began before we were half across the Syrian desert, converting the hard and ancient track of Eastern merchants and pilgrims into sticky mud, in which the five motors, two of them heavy with mails, sank above the axles. Day and night, wet all day and cold all night, we dug and pushed and hauled, so that when we reached Bagdad on the Tigris, I was encrusted with hardened mud from head to foot, and looked like a Rodin statue. But

<sup>1</sup> See Gibbon, chapter XI.

soon after our arrival the five excellent drivers (Britons who had served in the war and stayed out there) went to the head office of the mail company, and said : "Look here ! Whatever happens, we must keep Old Bill as a digger on the Staff ! "

*Laudari a laudatis !* That was the finest compliment ever paid me in the course of a long and variegated life.

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